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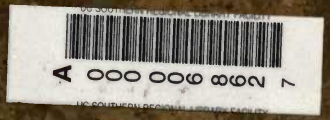

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GEORGE III.

TO

THE SESSION OF PARLIAMENT ENDING A. D. 1793.

BY W. BELSHAM.

VOL. IV.

THIRD EDITION.

Beneficio quàm metu obligare homines malit; exteraſque gentes fide ac ſocietate junctas habere, quàm triſti ſubjectas ſervitio. LIV. lib. 26.

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K. GEORGE III.

THE eſtabliſhed appellations of WHIG and TORY, as deſcriptive of the two grand political parties which under theſe or equivalent terms of diſtinction will doubtleſs ſubſiſt ſo long as the preſent Conſtitution of Government ſhall remain, though greatly changed from their original ſignification, it would nevertheleſs be faſtidious to reject. The gradations of ſentiment and principle which mark their progreſs it is however of indiſpenſable importance occaſionally to ſpecify. The principles of Whiggiſm may indeed in this reſpect be ſaid to have gained a complete triumph over thoſe of the antient Tories, inaſmuch as the once favorite maxims of Toryiſm—paſſive obedience, non-reſiſtance, and the divine and indefeaſible right of monarchy—have fallen into general contempt. Nor can any doctrines bearing the moſt diſtant analogy to theſe monſtrous abſurdities be now maintained, without the uſe of ſuch artificial and

ambiguous phraſeology as, however magnificent in ſound and ſhow, ſhall vaniſh from the touch of reaſon as miſts and vapors from the noon-day ſun.

Agreeably then to the viciſſitudes which have in a long ſeries of eventful years taken place in the views and ſentiments of the oppoſing parties of the State, a WHIG muſt now be underſtood to mean a man who, in addition to the ſpeculative principles of liberty civil and religious which have deſcended to him from his anceſtors, entertains a lively and well-founded jealouſy leſt the prerogative of the Crown ſhould, in conſequence of the prodigious increaſe of its influence, ultimately abſorb the whole power and authority of the other branches of the government, and with them the liberties of the nation at large, in its vaſt and tremendous vortex. A modern Whig acknowledges and deeply regrets the improvidence of his anceſtors in contributing, by the facility of their compliances, to the accumulation of an immenſe public debt, and the eſtabliſhment of a ſtanding army, both of which are yet in a ſtate alarmingly progreſſive. He can ſcarcely forgive thoſe extravagant ebullitions of loyalty which could ſacrifice the moſt ſacred principles of the Conſtitution to the intereſt or ambition of the reigning family, in prolonging by a moſt unjuſtifiable ſtretch of power the exiſtence of Parliaments to a term of dangerous duration, and in furniſhing to a Miniſter little ſcrupulous of ex-

pedients,

pedients, and regardleſs of conſequences, the means of univerſal and unbounded corruption. Whatever palliations of the fatal ſyſtem then adopted, the peculiarity of that Miniſter's ſituation, and the ſituation of the country at large in a political view, might then afford, had, it was affirmed, been long ſince entirely at an end; but the ſame ſyſtem is nevertheleſs reſolutely and uninterruptedly purſued, recovering Antæus-like from every apparent or accidental fall with renewed and redoubled vigor.

On the other hand, the modern Tories, although the deſcendants of thoſe who long entertained a moſt inveterate enmity againſt the family upon the throne, and who from motives not of the pureſt patriotiſm vehemently oppoſed in the former reigns the unconſtitutional meaſures of the Whigs, having at length entirely ſhaken off their old attachments, and being taken into favor and inveſted with power under the marked and too partial protection of the Court, ſuddenly became its open and zealous advocates—combining, as far as the ſpirit of the times would admit, the ſpeculative errors of one party with the practical errors of the other. The neceſſity of ſtrengthening the prerogative of the Monarch, and of ſupporting the DIGNITY of the CROWN, was from this time the inceſſant theme of their argument and declamation. Conceſſions and indulgencies were in their eſtimation things incompatible with the majeſty of the regal character.

The high, harsh, and peremptory tone of AUTHORITY uniformly marked every act of Government under the almost constant predominance of this dangerous faction during the present reign, from the commitment of a printer, or the prosecution of a libeller, to those measures of provocation and oppression terminating in a war which rent in twain and had well nigh subverted the empire.

This party, now grown strong and confident by an unexpected return of prosperity, assumed with ostentatious audacity the appellation of the KING'S FRIENDS, in which novel capacity they hesitated not to give their eager and ardent support to those measures of Court policy which had been ever reprobated by the Tories of elder days as in the highest degree pernicious and unconstitutional. The STANDING ARMY, so long the theme of their invective and reproach, was now affirmed to be necessary for the preservation of the national tranquillity; the public debt was pronounced a public benefit; the connection with Hanover was honorable and useful; the influence of the Crown was the happy means of consolidating the harmony of the different branches of Government; a long Parliament was said to be attended with no such inconvenient consequences as had been previously and erroneously apprehended; and every attempt to restore that equality in the representation, or rather to remove those glaring inequalities so incon-

sistent

ſiſtent with the ſpirit of the Conſtitution and the practice of former ages, was oppoſed and rejected by them in terms of unbounded obloquy and deteſtation, as leading to nothing leſs than the abſolute ſubverſion of Government. They profeſſed on all occaſions their dread of innovation and novelty—not adverting to the conſtant declaration of the antient Tories, that the things to which they objected were themſelves innovations wholly extraneous to the Conſtitution—and that they who merely wiſhed to *reſtore* were moſt unjuſtly accuſed of a fondneſs for innovation, or a dangerous propenſity to tamper with the Conſtitution by trying new and hazardous experiments.

Although the high and prepoſterous notions once prevalent reſpecting the AUTHORITY of the CHURCH had, in common with the old opinions relative to Civil Government, gradually fallen into diſrepute, the Tories of the preſent reign have been invariably characterized by the ſtrength of their attachment to the Eccleſiaſtical Eſtabliſhment, which they are delighted to applaud and extol as a model of purity and perfection. Any ſuggeſtions of the expediency of a reform in the Church, whether in relation to the irregularities of its diſcipline, or the errors of its doctrine as exhibited in a ſet of obſolete and unintelligible articles of faith, are received by this claſs of men with a ſort of horror, as leading to foul ſuſpicions of ſectarian hereſy or

atheiſtical profaneneſs; while the Diſſenters of all denominations are on the contrary viewed by them with eyes of jealouſy and hatred, and aſſiduouſly held up on all occaſions as the inveterate enemies of at leaſt one part of the Conſtitution, and as the doubtful friends at beſt of the other: and every idea of enlarging the limits of the toleration allowed them by law, and much more of extending to them the commou privileges of citizens, they have uniformly exclaimed againſt with affected terror and real malignity.

By theſe grand and leading features are the oppoſite parties of the preſent reign clearly diſcriminated; and whether theſe parties ſhall continue to be known under the eſtabliſhed denominations of Whig and Tory, whether by the appellations of Court and Country, King's Friends or Patriots, is of little importance, ſo that the terms be diſtinctly defined and generally underſtood; although in different individuals theſe different ſyſtems will of courſe be blended and diverſified by all the poſſible tints and ſhades of moral and political variety.

No ſooner had the Whigs, after a long and laborious oppoſition, driven their antagoniſts the Tories from the helm, and found themſelves in full poſſeſſion of the powers of government and the confidence of the people, than, in conſequence of the unfortunate miſunderſtanding and ſubſequent conflict of their leaders, they were again broken and divided;

divided; and each diviſion was under the neceſſity of ſtrengthening itſelf by forming new and dangerous connections with their former opponents. On the ſeceſſion of Mr. Fox, the Earl of Shelburne called in the aid, though in a ſomewhat covert manner, of the Jenkinſon party; and when a fair proſpect of ſupplanting that nobleman in a ſhort time occurred, Mr. Fox ſcrupled not, to the aſtoniſhment and indignation of the kingdom, publicly to coaleſce with Lord North and his numerous partiſans. The Earl of Shelburne having been far more guarded in his previous declarations, as well as his ſubſequent political aſſociations, eſcaped the obloquy which attended the more flagrant inconſiſtency of his once popular rival; who, by openly connecting himſelf with that individual Miniſter of the Crown whom he had ſo long and ſo ſucceſsfully labored to viliſy and diſgrace, had for ever forfeited his claim to the flattering appellation of "the Man of the People."

On the diſmiſſion of the Coalition Adminiſtration, Mr. Pitt, the head of the new Miniſtry, was in a manner compelled, like his predeceſſor Lord Shelburne, to admit no inconſiderable proportion of the Tories to ſhare in the honors and emoluments of Government; and the nation, equally enraged at the Whigs and the Tories of the Coalition, willingly excuſed the re-admiſſion of thoſe Members of the Old Tory Adminiſtration who

could plead the recent merit of inveighing againſt the Coalition, and of oppoſing the India Bill of Mr. Fox.

From this mixture of Toryiſm in the new Adminiſtration, nevertheleſs, the moſt pernicious and direful conſequences have ultimately reſulted. The reign of the preſent Monarch has indeed been diſtinguiſhed by a ſtrange and dreadful fatality; and the deplorable infatuation almoſt invariably actuating the National Councils, and which has been productive of ſuch mighty miſchiefs, may well appear to the contemplative and philoſophic mind—penetrating beyond the dark cloud which bounds the view of common obſervers—the deſtined means of accompliſhing the grand and beneficent purpoſes of that wiſdom in compariſon with which the higheſt human ſagacity is as weakneſs and folly. But theſe are reflections which more properly appertain to the province of the theologiſt than the hiſtorian.

After the diviſion which took place on the addreſs, and which terminated in the complete triumph of the new Miniſtry, the buſineſs which chiefly for a time occupied the attention of the Houſe and of the Public, was the complaint ſtated by Mr. Fox reſpecting the conduct of the High Bailiff of Weſtminſter, who had obſtinately and daringly refuſed to make the return in his favor, although he had upon the face of the poll a majority of 235 votes.

Mr.

Mr. Fox, however, was not deprived of his ſeat in Parliament by this infamous procedure, being, through the intereſt of his friend Sir Thomas Dundas, choſen Member for the Borough of Kirkwall, in the Orkneys; on which occaſion Mr. Pitt, in the height of his exultation, gratified his feelings by a ſarcaſtical delineation of his antagoniſt, as a man on whom a ſort of ſentence of baniſhment had paſſed—who had been driven by the efforts of patriotic indignation as an exile from his native clime, and forced to ſeek for refuge on the ſtormy and deſolate ſhore of the "Ultima Thulé."

On the 24th of May a reſolution was moved by Mr. Lee, late Attorney General, "that the High Bailiff of Weſtminſter on the day upon which the writ of election expired ought to have returned two citizens to ſerve in Parliament for that city." A violent debate enſued; and the previous queſtion having been moved by Sir Lloyd Kenyon, it was ordered that the High Bailiff ſhould attend the Houſe on the day following. The ſole pretext on which that officer reſted his defence was, that having ground to ſuſpect the validity of many votes taken in the courſe of a poll of ſix weeks duration, he had granted a *ſcrutiny*, till the termination of which he could not *in conſcience* make the return. To this an obvious and deciſive anſwer preſented itſelf. The ſcrutiny is nothing more than a reviſion of the poll by the returning officer; and if ſuch

reviſion

reviſion is not, and cannot be, completed previous to the period at which the writ is returnable, the officer is bound, by the nature of his office, and the tenor of his oath, to make the return agreeably to the poll as it was actually taken. For if vague preſumptions of the nature now alleged were admitted as juſt cauſes of procraſtination, elections would be thrown entirely into the hands of the returning officer, who, if gained over by the Court, might for any indefinite term prevent thoſe who were obnoxious to the Adminiſtration for the time being from taking their ſeats in Parliament; and the repreſentation of the kingdom would be thus rendered flagrantly corrupt, partial, and imperfect. Had the High Bailiff really felt thoſe *ſcruples of conſcience* by which he pretended to be thus embarraſſed, the law of Parliament allowed him to include all the candidates in the ſame return, which would at once have transferred the taſk and burden of the deciſion from his own conſcience to the conſcience of the Houſe. After long pleadings by counſel at the bar of the Houſe on either part, the motion was renewed, "that the High Bailiff be directed forthwith to make the return." To the diſgrace of the new Adminiſtration, this motion was vehemently oppoſed, and on a diviſion finally negatived—the ayes being 117, the noes 195. It was then moved and carried, "that the High Bailiff do proceed in the ſcrutiny with all practicable diſpatch."

diſpatch." Thus was this buſineſs laid at reſt during the preſent ſeſſion; but the character of the new Miniſter ſuffered, in conſequence of the part which he took in the conduct of it, an indelible ſtain. Though as yet of years immature and unhacknied in the ways of men, he was indignantly perceived capable with alacrity and eagerneſs to juſtify injuſtice, and to become an active and voluntary inſtrument of mean and inſidious revenge.

On the 16th of June a motion was made by Mr. Alderman Sawbridge, and ſeconded by Mr. Alderman Newnham, both of them repreſentatives of the City of London, that a Committee be appointed to enquire into the preſent ſtate of the repreſentation of the Commons of Great Britain in Parliament. The meaſure itſelf had the concurrence and ſupport of Mr. Pitt, though the new Miniſter profeſſed in the uſual language of Miniſters that the *time* was improper; and indeed the motion appears to have been calculated and deſigned rather to embarraſs the Miniſter than to promote the propoſed object. Mr. Dundas, who had ſupported the former propoſition of Mr. Pitt, luckily found a diſtinction which enabled him to oppoſe the preſent motion, without in the leaſt diminiſhing his reputation for conſiſtency. His objection was, that the Committee now moved for was a ſelect Committee, whereas the Committee for which he had formerly voted was a

Committee of the whole Houſe. On the diviſion upon the previous queſtion, the numbers were 201 to 127.

The grand buſineſs of the preſent ſeſſion, however, was the arrangement of a plan for the future government of India. For this purpoſe, Mr. Pitt on the 6th of July brought in a bill, founded on the general principles of that rejected by the former Parliament, and to which the Company had now given their ſlow and reluctant aſſent. By this bill a BOARD of CONTROL, compoſed of a certain number of Commiſſioners of the rank of Privy Counſellors, was eſtabliſhed, the members of which were to be appointed by the King, and removable at his pleaſure. This Board was authorized to check, ſuperintend, and control the civil and military government and revenue of the Company. The diſpatches tranſmitted by the Court of Directors to the different Preſidencies were to be previouſly ſubjected to the inſpection of the Superior Board, and counter-ſigned by them; and the Directors were enjoined to pay due obedience to the orders of the Board, touching civil and military government and revenues; and in caſe ſuch orders do at any time in the opinion of the Directors relate to points not connected therewith, they are empowered to appeal to his Majeſty in Council, whoſe deciſion is declared final. The bill moreover enacted, that the appointment of the

Court

Court of Directors to the office of Governor-General, President, or Counsellor in the different Presidencies, shall be subject to the approbation and recall of his Majesty. As to the zemindars or great hereditary land-holders of India, who had been violently dispossessed of their property, and who, agreeably to the generous and decisive tenor of Mr. Fox's bill, were to have been universally and peremptorily reinstated in their zemindaries, the present bill provided only that an enquiry should be instituted in order to restore such as should appear to have been irregularly and unjustly deprived. Lastly, an high tribunal was created for the trial of Indian delinquents, consisting of three Judges, one from each Court, of four Peers and six Members of the House of Commons, who were authorized to judge without appeal—to award in case of conviction the punishments of fine and imprisonment—and to declare the party convicted incapable of serving the East India Company. These were the grand and leading features of the bill, and the most transient observation sufficed to shew that the objectionable parts of Mr. Fox's bill had been anxiously and completely avoided. The management of their commercial concerns was left in the hands of the Company, who were divested only of that political power which they had so grossly abused, and of that civil authority to the due exercise of which they were so mani-

feſtly incompetent. And this authority was not transferred to perſons who, like the Commiſſioners of Mr. Fox, might attempt to eſtabliſh an unconſtitutional influence in Parliament, not merely independent of, but in direct oppoſition to, the regular and conſtitutional authority of the Crown; but in the effort to ſteer clear of the rock of Scylla, it was evident that Mr. Pitt had plunged into the gulph of Charybdis, and that by this bill a vaſt acceſſion of influence reſulted to the Crown, already poſſeſſing a dangerous, formidable and increaſing aſcendancy over the other branches of the legiſlature.

Mr. Fox, with his uſual powers of diſcrimination, attacked the weak and exceptionable parts of this bill, although the utmoſt energy of his eloquence was found inadequate to excite the general attention of the public to the merits or demerits of the meaſure in queſtion—prepoſſeſſed as they now almoſt univerſally were in favor of the Miniſter with whom it originated, and in whom they placed the moſt entire and unlimited confidence. Mr. Fox urged with great force and animation, that this bill eſtabliſhed a weak and inefficient government, by dividing its powers. To the one Board belonged the privilege of ordering and contriving meaſures: to the other, that of carrying them into execution. It was a ſyſtem of dark intrigue and deluſive art. By the negative veſted

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in the Commiſſioners, the CHARTERED RIGHTS of the Company, on which ſuch ſtreſs had been laid, were inſidiouſly undermined and virtually annihilated. If it were right to veſt ſuch powers in a Board of Privy Counſellors, let it be done explicitly and openly, and ſhew the Company and the world, that what they dared to do they dared to juſtify. Founded on principles ſo heterogeneous, how could ſuch a government be other than the conſtant victim of internal diſtraction? The appeal allowed from the deciſions of the Board of Control to the Privy Council was affirmed by Mr. Fox to be palpably nugatory and ridiculous. The bill he had introduced, exhibited at the firſt bluſh the features of openneſs, fairneſs, and reſponſibility. The preſent plan was full of darkneſs and diſguiſe. In a covert and concealed mode, an immenſe patronage was tranſferred to the Crown, which, inſtead of correcting abuſes, opened a door to every ſpecies of colluſion and corruption. It was calculated to eſtabliſh an Indian government of the iſland of Great Britain. Againſt the clauſes of the bill reſpecting the zemindars, Mr. Fox entered his ſtrongeſt proteſt. The zemindars ought, in his opinion, to be rated by a fixed rule of paſt periods, and not of a vague and indefinite future enquiry. The new tribunal Mr. Fox ſtigmatized as a ſcreen for delinquents; as a palpable and unconſtitutional

ſtitutional violation of the ſacred right of Trial by Jury. Since no man was to be tried but on the accuſation of the Company or the Attorney-General, he had only to conciliate Government in order to his remaining in perfect ſecurity. It was a part of the general ſyſtem of deception and deluſion, and he would venture to pronounce it a "Bed of Juſtice," where juſtice would for ever ſleep. On the motion of commitment, the numbers were ayes 276, noes 61; and it was carried in triumph to the Houſe of Peers, where, after an oppoſition vigorous in point of exertion, but feeble in regard of numbers, the bill paſſed Auguſt 9, 1784. It was accompanied by a proteſt, in which it was ſeverely branded as a meaſure ineffectual in its proviſions, unjuſt in its inquiſitorial ſpirit, and unconſtitutional in its partial abolition of the Trial by Jury.

Amongſt thoſe who had chiefly diſtinguiſhed themſelves in the inveſtigation of Indian affairs, and whoſe indignation had been moſt ſtrongly awakened at the diſcovery of the enormous oppreſſion exerciſed in thoſe diſtant regions, was Mr. Burke. Agreeably, indeed, to the general caſt of his character and genius, Mr. Burke's acuteneſs of reſearch, and that extenſive knowledge of the ſubject which he had acquired by long and indefatigable attention, was obſcured and rendered in a great meaſure uſeleſs, and even pernicious,

pernicious, by the violence of his paſſions, and the obſtinacy of his prejudices. Not ſatisfied with exhibiting facts ſufficiently atrocious in their own nature in the ſimple garb of truth, Mr. Burke was eager upon all occaſions to impreſs the public mind, and heighten the general effect, by all the arts of rhetorical amplification and embelliſhment. So little of philoſophy, however, entered into the oratory of this famous ſpeaker, that the effect produced upon the public mind was directly oppoſite to that which he himſelf expected and intended. Amidſt the blaze of declamation, and the thunders of invective, the ingenuous enquirer after TRUTH found it inſuperably difficult to aſcertain with preciſion thoſe points on which the charge of criminality reſted. To the moſt careleſs obſerver, it was apparent that in numerous inſtances facts were diſtorted and diſguiſed; that the moſt invidious conſtruction was invariably annexed even to the moſt indifferent actions; that every thing was ſeen through the medium of falſe and artificial colorings; that the dignified candor which gives weight to an accuſation was wholly wanting. His calmneſs was ſettled rancor; his warmth, the phrenſy of rage and revenge. Mr. Burke had long ſingled out Mr. Haſtings, late Governor General of India, as the object of his moſt furious attacks; but from the circumſtances now enumerated, the feelings of the pub-

lic were in a conſiderable degree excited in his favor. Added to this, the ſucceſſes of the late war in India, contraſted with the defeats and diſaſters ſuſtained by the nation in all other parts of the globe, caſt a certain ſplendor around the character of Mr. Haſtings, who had acquired the popular appellation of the *Saviour of India*, while to appreciate the real merits of his long and eventful adminiſtration required a ſagacity and diligence of reſearch for which the inclination and ability were, to ſpeak in general terms, equally wanting. Mr. Burke had alſo entirely loſt the degree of credit which he once poſſeſſed with the public, by ſtanding forward as the avowed advocate and champion of the deteſted coalition, of which he was indeed more than ſuſpected to have been the original projector, although the bitterneſs of his former invectives againſt the late Miniſter Lord North could not be exceeded by his moſt virulent effuſions againſt the more recent object of his intemperate abuſe, Mr. Haſtings. In a word, Mr. Burke appeared in the view of the public at this period, as a man of talents indeed, but totally deſtitute of judgment, and even of principle; who, actuated by pride, ſpleen, and ambition, affected to aſſume the elevated character of a CICERO, dragging a delinquent of the firſt magnitude—a VERRES, to public juſtice: while Mr. Haſtings, on the other hand, was regarded as a man deſerving

ing highly of his country, and who had from ſecret and ſiniſter motives become the unfortunate object of an unjuſt and iniquitous perſecution.

Early in July, the Miniſter, Mr. Pitt, acquainted the Houſe with the arrival of Sir Elijah Impey, Chief Judge of the Supreme Court of Judicacature in Bengal, who had been recalled by the King, in conformity to an addreſs of that Houſe. Mr. Burke upon this remarked, that the reſolutions upon the ſubject were originally moved and ſeconded by Sir Adam Ferguſon and General Smith, who were not members of the preſent Parliament. The charge againſt the delinquent in queſtion having already received the ſanction of that Houſe, it might be proper to proceed againſt him by impeachment. For his own part, however, he totally declined taking the lead in this buſineſs. What hope could he, a ſolitary and unaſſiſted individual, entertain of ſucceſs, when the Nobleman now preſiding in the Houſe of Peers had expreſsly declared, in relation to the Reports in which the proceedings originated, that he regarded them no more than the romance of Robinſon Cruſoe? He therefore earneſtly recommended it to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as the chief conductor and repreſentative of the executive government, to enforce the reſolutions of that Houſe relating to Sir Elijah Impey. But Mr. Pitt totally, and in the moſt unequivocal terms,

declined any concern in the affair. This was not the only indication of a fixed determination in the preſent Miniſtry to diſcountenance all judicial inveſtigation of the antecedent tranſactions in India.

On the 28th of July, Mr. Burke moved, "That the Houſe ſhould reſolve itſelf into a Committee, to enquire into the facts ſtated in the different Reports relative to India." He aſſerted, that his character was at ſtake. If, as had been ſuggeſted, the Reports were mere fables, they were indeed calumnies of the moſt bold and unprincipled nature, and he himſelf was an infamous calumniator. The two ſets of Reports originating from the different Committees acknowledged as their parents Mr. Dundas and himſelf. The Right Honorable Gentleman had indeed ſeen the drawn ſcymitar lifted up to divide and deſtroy his offſpring without diſcovering any ſymptom of emotion. But the ſpectacle was too horrid for his feelings. He wiſhed to intercept the arm of the executioner, and to receive the bloody and flagitious ſtroke in his own perſon: "*Adſum qui feci,*" exclaimed the orator, "*in me convertite ferrum!*" In contempt of this flight of eloquence, Mr. Dundas coolly moved the *Order of the Day*.

Diſappointed in this attempt, Mr. Burke two days afterwards brought forward a ſeries of reſolutions, intended as a foundation for an enquiry into

into the conduct of Mr. Haſtings. On this Mr. Pitt roſe, and aſked, "How that Houſe, as a Houſe of Parliament, knew as a fact the tranſactions on which Mr. Burke grounded his motions? If the motions paſſed, from what office were the papers expected to proceed? To relieve the Houſe from theſe embarraſſments, he ſaid, he ſhould move the *Order of the Day*." This ſecond interruption was more than the patience of Mr. Burke could endure. He affirmed the inſenſibility of Government to the foul enormities lately perpetrated, and ſtill perpetrating, by our countrymen in the Eaſt, to be truly ſhocking. He deprecated the day that the knowledge of them had come to his mind. The miſerable objects it exhibited, nations extirpated, provinces deſolated, cities and countries overwhelmed in one maſs of deſtruction, conſtantly dwelt on his imagination. The cries of the native Indians were never out of his ears; an impreſſion of horror had ſeized on his mind, which deprived him of ſleep, and night and day preyed upon his peace. The reality of the facts ſtated in the Reports had been impeached. Why then would not the men who denied them ſtand forward and ſupport their allegations? Oh! what, ſaid this impaſſioned orator, would I not give to find the ſcenes of horror there deſcribed nothing more than a fiction! To me it would be a diſcovery more precious and grateful than the diſcovery of

a new world. He declared, that he wiſhed it for the honor of humanity, from ſympathy to millions of ſuffering and helpleſs individuals, from an anxious deſire to retrieve the honor of the Houſe, and of the country at large, from infamy and execration. He conjured Mr. Pitt to reflect with ſerioufneſs on this buſineſs. The voice of India cried aloud for juſtice. He was at a loſs, he ſaid, how to account for the callous inſenſibility of the Miniſter, at a time of life when all the generous feelings of our nature are moſt lively and ſuſceptible;—and proceeding in reflections very pointed and perſonal, he was loudly called to order; and ſtill perſevering in his exclamations and reproaches, was at length compelled to ſit down, amidſt the univerſal clamor and tumult of the Houſe.

On the diſmiſſion of this unwelcome buſineſs, the attention of the Houſe was immediately tranſferred to a bill introduced by the Miniſter, for the more effectual prevention of the practice of ſmuggling, which had of late years ariſen to a moſt alarming height. This bill contained various prudential but ſomewhat ſevere regulations. The diſtance from ſhore, at which ſeizures ſhould in future be deemed lawful, was extended, and the conſtructing of veſſels of a certain form and dimenſion peculiarly calculated for contraband purpoſes prohibited. But by far the moſt extra-

ordinary

ordinary part of the preſent plan was the reduction of the duties paid by the Eaſt India Company on the importation of TEA, which was affirmed to be the grand medium of the ſmuggling traffic; and the conſequent impoſition of a new duty on windows, already moſt grievouſly burdened, to the amount of the deficiency, eſtimated at no leſs than ſix hundred thouſand pounds per annum. This was ſtyled by the Miniſter a Commutation Tax; and the equity of it was defended on the general and vague idea, that, teas being an article of univerſal conſumption, the weight of the tax would be compenſated by a proportional abatement in the purchaſe of the commodity. Nothing, however, could be more fallacious than this ſtatement, nor perhaps any impoſt more oppreſſive in its practical operation. It is obvious, that in large towns and cities, ground for the purpoſe of building being very valuable, houſes are erected on a comparatively confined ſcale, and the number of windows is very moderate. But in ſmall towns and villages, where ground is cheap, houſes are for the moſt part conſtructed on a more convenient model, with ranges of offices, and windows commanding the court-yards, gardens, &c. contiguous to the dwelling. On theſe peaceful and rural retreats the tax fell heavily indeed; and the miſerable effects of it are fully apparent in the multitude of windows ſtopped up

in farm-houſes and other country reſidences, to the inexpreſſible injury of the eaſe, health, and comfort of a very great proportion of the community. But in the metropolis and other opulent and populous towns the tax fell lightly; and in conſequence of the greater prevalence of luxury, the reduction of the duty on tea more than compenſating in ſuch ſituations for the addition of the new tax, this meaſure was applauded as a happy ſtroke of finance. A vigorous but unavailing oppoſition to the bill was nevertheleſs made by Mr. Fox, who aſked, what connection there was between an impoſt upon tea and an impoſt upon windows, to entitle the latter to be denominated a commutation for the former? He affirmed it to be the eſſence of financial injuſtice and oppreſſion to take off a tax upon luxury, and to ſubſtitute in its ſtead a tax upon that which was of indiſpenſable neceſſity. Spirits were a leading article of ſmuggling, and a luxury in common uſe, as well as tea. But would the Miniſter venture to purſue the commuting principle of this bill to its full extent, and, aboliſhing the duties on ſpirituous liquors, to impoſe another tax upon windows, and aſſign as a reaſon, that all men may be preſumed or expected to drink rum and brandy in their own houſes? The obligations of this kingdom to the Eaſt India Company, and the vaſt revenue we derived from the commerce carried on by them, had

been

been much inſiſted on; but ſurely it was at all times eaſy, without having recourſe to their inſtrumentality, to obtain the ſame revenue by the ſame means.

Mr. Courtenay, a member of the Houſe, diſtinguiſhed no leſs by the readineſs of his wit than the vigor of his underſtanding, remarked, that the bill now before the Houſe was the counterpart of the deteſtable *Gabelle* or Salt-tax in France. There an impoſt was laid upon that article, and every man was obliged to take and pay for a certain quantity, whether he wanted it or not. As the preſent Adminiſtration had in other reſpects degraded the Commons of Great Britain to a level with the Parliaments of France, it was indeed perfectly conſiſtent in them to introduce a ſimilar principle of taxation. The bill at length paſſed the Houſe by a very great majority; after no very long interval receiving the royal aſſent; and it muſt be confeſſed, that in a commercial and financial view it has beyond the moſt ſanguine previous calculation anſwered its intended purpoſe.

The remaining great operation of finance during this extraordinary ſeſſion, was the providing for the arrears of the unfunded debt left at the concluſion of the war, amounting to more than twenty millions. This was diſpoſed of partly in the four per cents. and partly in a newly created five per cent. ſtock, made irredeemable for thirty

 years,

years, or until twenty-five millions of the exiſting funds ſhould be extinguiſhed. The taxes for the payment of the intereſt of this vaſt ſum were, in the preſent exhauſted ſtate of the national finances, upon the whole allowed to be happily and judiciouſly choſen. It muſt not be omitted, that the ſum of ſixty thouſand pounds was in the courſe of the ſeſſion voted to his Majeſty, to enable him to diſcharge the debt contracted in the civil liſt. This was the fourth grant for the ſame purpoſe ſince the acceſſion of the preſent King. Much altercation aroſe on this occaſion between the old and the new miniſtry, as to the preciſe period when this new debt was incurred. All however that the public at large could be fully certified of was, that with a civil liſt revenue of eight hundred thouſand pounds, afterwards increaſed to nine hundred thouſand pounds per annum, excluſive of the revenues ariſing from the crown lands, more than fourteen hundred thouſand pounds had been voted within the ſpace of about fifteen years for the payment of the debts of the crown. And the ſtern obſervation of the famous MILTON could not but forcibly recur in ſuch circumſtances to the public recollection—"That the very trappings of a monarchy were more than ſufficient to defray the whole expence of a republic."

The laſt meaſure which came under parliamentary diſcuſſion during the preſent ſeſſion, was

a bill

a bill introduced by Mr. Dundas, and of a nature perfectly congenial to the urbanity and good humour, which, notwithstanding his political frailties, characterized that able and versatile Minister, for the restoration of the estates forfeited in Scotland, in consequence of the rebellions of 1715 and 1745. Mr. Dundas declared the measure to be in his opinion worthy of the justice and generosity of Parliament. He said, there was not one of the families comprehended in the scope of it, in which some person had not atoned for the crimes and errors of his ancestors, by sacrificing his blood in the cause of his country; and that the Sovereign had not for a long series of years past a more loyal set of subjects than the Highlanders of Scotland and their Chieftians. Of this the late Lord Chatham was deeply sensible, and that illustrious Statesman had publicly recognized the rectitude of the measure now proposed. And he trusted, that the remains of a system, which, whether directed at first by narrow views or sound policy, ought certainly to be temporary, would be completely annihilated under the administration of his son. He did not however mean, that the estates should be freed from the claims existing against them at the time of forfeiture. This might be regarded as a premium for rebellion. He therefore proposed the appropriation of such sums, amounting to about eighty thousand pounds, to public

public purpoſes; fifty thouſand of which he would recommend to be employed in the completion of the grand canal reaching from the Frith of Forth to that of Clyde. This bill was received in a manner which did honor to the feelings of the Houſe. Mr. Fox in particular, with his uſual generoſity, beſtowed upon it the higheſt encomiums, and profeſſed himſelf deterred only by the lateneſs of the ſeſſion, from endeavoring to enlarge its operation to what he conceived to be its juſt and proper extent. Nevertheleſs, when the bill was ſent to the Lords, it met with a moſt determined and malignant reſiſtance from the Lord Chancellor, who expatiated with much ſatisfaction on that maxim of antient wiſdom, which pronounced treaſon to be a crime of ſo deep a dye, that nothing leſs was adequate to its puniſhment than the total eradication of the perſon, the name, and the family out of the community. Happily, on dividing the Houſe, this Nobleman was left in a ſmall and diſgraceful minority, and the bill finally paſſed with that public approbation and applauſe it ſo juſtly merited.

An end was put to the ſeſſion Auguſt 20, 1784, the King returning his warmeſt thanks to the two Houſes, for their zealous and diligent attention to the public ſervice. He predicted the happieſt effects from the bill for the better government of India. He ſpoke in terms of high commenda-

tion

tion of the laws enacted for the improvement of the revenue. He thanked his faithful Commons for their provision for the arrears of the Civil List; deploring, nevertheless, in the accustomed style, the *unavoidable burdens* imposed upon his people. He noticed the definitive treaty with Holland, and the peace concluded in India; and trusted, from the assurances of foreign powers, that the present tranquillity would prove of permanent duration.

In the interval between the prorogation of the Parliament and its re-assembling in the course of the ensuing winter, the nation enjoyed a flattering and delightful repose. Highly gratified with the recent change which had taken place, they viewed with unbounded complacency and confidence the Minister now at the head of affairs; and indulged the most fond and sanguine hopes, that under his auspices Britain would be restored to her former enviable state of prosperity and greatness: and the name of PITT, endeared by the recollection of all that can interest the feelings of a generous and grateful people, seemed anew consecrated to patriotism, to liberty, and to virtue.

Ireland, however, at this period exhibited a very dissimilar picture. The political tempest which had agitated that kingdom during the latter years of the late war had not yet subsided.

Much

Much had indeed been acquired, but much alſo yet remained to be done. The two queſtions which at the preſent juncture chiefly occupied the public attention, were thoſe which related to the ſtate of their commerce, and the ſtate of their repreſentation.

So long ſince as the 1ſt of July 1783, the delegates of forty-five volunteer corps had aſſembled at Liſburne, in the county of Antrim, to conſider of the meaſures proper to be adopted, in order to effect a reform in the national repreſentation. A Committee was by them appointed to meet at Belfaſt, at the head of which preſided Colonel Sharman. By this Committee letters were addreſſed to many perſons in the Siſter Kingdom, moſt diſtinguiſhed for their talents, their virtues, and their zeal in the cauſe of liberty, requeſting their advice and opinion on this important ſubject; among theſe were the Duke of Richmond, Lord Effingham, Mr. Pitt, Dr. Price, and Dr. Jebb. The moſt remarkable of the anſwers returned to this Committee was that of the Duke of Richmond, who recommended with great force, and in the moſt decided language, the plan of UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE. "All plans merely of a ſpeculative nature," this bold reformer affirmed, "had been found inſufficient to intereſt and animate the great body of the people, from whoſe earneſtneſs alone any reform was to be expected.

A long excluſion from any ſhare in the legiſlation of their country had rendered the great maſs of the people indifferent whether the monopoly that ſubſiſted continued in the hands of a more or leſs extended company; or whether it were divided by them into ſhares of ſomewhat more or leſs juſt proportion. They had been ſo often deceived, that they were ſcarcely now diſpoſed to confide in any ſet of men. Nothing but ſelf-evident conviction that a meaſure tended effectually to the recovery of their rights, could, or indeed OUGHT to intereſt them in its favor."

The meeting at Liſburne was quickly followed by an aſſembly of Delegates held at Dungannon, for the province of Ulſter; at which the Earl of Charlemont, Generaliſſimo of the volunteer corps throughout the kingdom; Mr. Conolly, conſidered as the firſt Commoner in point of property; and the Biſhop of Derry, brother to the late Earl of Briſtol nominated in the year 1766 to the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland, were preſent. The provinces of Leinſter and Munſter followed the example of Ulſter—a NATIONAL CONVENTION was appointed to be held at Dublin on the 10th of November.

Such was the poſture of affairs in that kingdom when the Parliament of Ireland, recently elected, met on the 14th of October 1783. The Earl of Northington opened the ſeſſion with a judicious

ſpeech,

ſpeech, in which he profeſſed to anticipate the greateſt national benefits from the wiſdom and temper of the new Parliament. On the very firſt day of the ſeſſion the thanks of both Houſes were voted to the different volunteer corps of Ireland for their public ſervices: and a farther proof of the independent ſpirit now prevalent appeared in the reſolution propoſed by Lord Mountmorres, and which received the ſanction of both Houſes, "That in the preſent ſtate of the kingdom, it was expedient that there ſhould be a Seſſion of Parliament held every year."

On the 10th of November the National Convention met agreeably to their appointment. Of this formidable aſſembly the Earl of Charlemont was elected Preſident. On the motion of the Biſhop of Derry, a Committee was forthwith appointed to digeſt a plan of reform, who in a ſhort time reported their opinion, That every *proteſtant freeholder*, or leaſeholder, poſſeſſing a freehold or leaſehold for a certain term of years of forty ſhillings value, reſident in any city or borough, ſhould be entitled to a vote in the election of member for the ſame: That decayed boroughs ſhould be enabled to return repreſentatives by an extenſion of franchiſe to the neighbouring pariſhes: That the ſuffrages of the electors ſhould be taken by the Sheriff or his deputies on the ſame day at the reſpective places of election: That penſioners

of

of the Crown, receiving their penſions during pleaſure, ſhould be incapacitated from ſitting in Parliament; that every Member of Parliament accepting a penſion for life, or any place under the Crown, ſhould vacate his ſeat; that each Member ſhould ſubſcribe an oath, that he had neither directly nor indirectly given any pecuniary or other conſideration, with a view of obtaining the ſuffrage of any elector; finally, that the duration of Parliament ſhould not exceed the term of three years. This report was received by the Convention with great applauſe, and reſolutions to the ſame purport unanimouſly paſſed.

On the very next day Mr. Flood, long known by his able and eloquent exertions in the cauſe of liberty, moved the Houſe of Commons for leave to bring in a bill for the more equal repreſentation of the people in Parliament. It now appeared that the Coalition Miniſters, as yet in the zenith of their power, had formed a fixed determination to oppoſe to the utmoſt the encroachments of a dangerous and armed democracy, unknown in their newly aſſumed capacity to the laws and to the conſtitution.

Mr. Yelverton, Attorney General, declared that the queſtion thus introduced did not deſerve to be diſcuſſed, but that it ought to be regarded as an inſult upon the Houſe. If the bill originated, as it was notorious it did, with a body of armed

men, they ſhould decidedly ſet their faces againſt receiving it. They did not ſit there to receive propoſitions at the point of the bayonet. He entertained an extreme reverence for the Volunteers, for the eſſential ſervices they had conferred on their country; but when they formed themſelves into a political body, to diſcuſs the modes of reforming Parliament, and to regulate the affairs of the Nation; when they would probe the wounds of the Conſtitution with the ſword, he would be their moſt determined opponent. The queſtion was now, Whether the National Convention or the Parliament of Ireland were to legiſlate for the country? What phænomenon was it they had ſo lately ſeen? Armed men drawn up in files, preparing the way for other armed men, reſorting in faſtidious pomp to a general aſſembly, and diſplaying all the oſtentation of a real Parliament! Would they ſubmit to this? Was it decent for Parliament to enter into any ſort of compromiſe with this Congreſs? Were the Members of that Houſe free in their deliberations while this Military Congreſs were ſitting? No: it was neceſſary they ſhould ſay to the Volunteers,—"You have obtained a conſtitution and commerce; and now, inſtead of dictating to the Legiſlature of the kingdom, go to your own homes, change your attire, and turn your ſwords, no longer needed for the defence of your country, into plough-ſhares and pruning-hooks."

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This ſpeech, ſeconded by the efforts of Mr. Pelham, Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, and other zealous partiſans of Government, was deciſive; and notwithſtanding the ardent exertions of the rival patriots, Mr. Flood and Mr. Grattan, the Houſe at a very late hour divided—Ayes 77, noes 157.

Deſirous to fix a ſtill farther ſtigma on the meaſures of the Convention, it was immediately moved by Mr. Yelverton, "That it was now neceſſary to declare that this Houſe would ſupport the rights and privileges of Parliament againſt all encroachments."

This reſolution being carried by a great majority, an Addreſs to the King was moved, expreſſive of the ſenſe felt by the Houſe of the bleſſings they enjoyed under his auſpices, and aſſuring him that they were determined to ſupport inviolate the preſent Conſtitution with their lives and fortunes.

In this Addreſs the Lords concurred. A proteſt, however, ſigned by the Earl of Charlemont and four other Peers, was entered in the Journals of the Houſe againſt it.

Mr. Flood reported to the National Convention, at their ſitting of the 1ſt of December, the conduct of the Houſe of Commons; but far from diſplaying any ſymptoms of reſentment, or even ſurpriſe, they came only to a tame and unintelligible reſolution, "That they would carry on individually ſuch *inveſtigations* as might be neceſſary

to complete the *plan* of Parliamentary Reform;" not adverting to their recent and unanimous approval of a plan of reform, which they now virtually discarded as incomplete. But their humiliation was yet more apparent in the Address voted on the following day to the King, on the motion of Mr. Flood, in the name of the delegates of all the Volunteers of Ireland, "expressive of their duty and loyalty, claiming the merits of their past exertions, and imploring the King that their humble wish to have certain manifest perversions of the parliamentary representation of that kingdom remedied by the Legislature in some reasonable degree, might not be attributed to any spirit of innovation, but to a sober and laudable desire to uphold the Constitution, to confirm the satisfaction of their fellow subjects, and to perpetuate the cordial union of both kingdoms." This act of passive obedience and submission being ended, the Convention adjourned *sine die*.

So unexpected and extraordinary a termination of a business which had previously worn so menacing and formidable an aspect, merits some attention. The Convention probably did not at all expect a conduct so spirited and decisive on the part of the House of Commons. If they resolved on the prosecution of their plan, in direct contravention to the declared sense of the House, the most alarming consequences might be expected to ensue.

enſue. Excluſive of the perſonal riſque which they muſt in that caſe neceſſarily incur as members of an illegal and TRAITOROUS aſſembly, they unqueſtionably neither wiſhed themſelves, nor was it by any means clear that their conſtituents were prepared to ſupport them in any attempt to ſubvert the eſtabliſhed government by force. The proſpect of ultimate advantage bore no proportion to the certainty and magnitude of the evil to be encountered. Another conſideration of the greateſt moment was, that this Convention well knew they did not really poſſeſs the confidence of the nation, taking that term in its proper and moſt extenſive ſenſe. It was an undoubted fact that more than two thirds of the inhabitants of the kingdom were Catholics, who, if the propoſed plan of reform had been adopted, would receive no benefit from it; and who were of courſe wholly indifferent as to the ſucceſs of it. By ſome daring and deciſive ſpirits it was indeed propoſed at the provincial meetings, to place the Catholics in the new order of things preciſely upon the ſame footing with the Proteſtants. This would indeed have given irreſiſtible weight to the application; but men capable of cool and ſober reflection, though firm and zealous friends to ſafe and moderate reform, were with reaſon ſtartled at the idea of ſo novel and hazardous an experiment.—The notion of abſtract rights, founded on a falſe

metaphyſic theory, will never operate powerfully but on the minds of ſpeculatiſts, who, remote from ſcenes of action and danger, "dream over books, and leave mankind unknown."

The real practical enquiry with the generality of perſons on this grand queſtion of UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE, as it undoubtedly ought to be on all occaſions of a political nature, was—What will be the EFFECT PRODUCED? And it was obvious that the recognition of this claim would at once throw the entire power of the kingdom into the hands of the Catholics; and no credulity could ſurely reach that degree of infatuation, as to expect a body of men ſo ignorant, bigoted and ferocious, as the collective maſs of the Iriſh Catholics, to make a wiſe and temperate uſe of the power thus preposterouſly put into their hands.

To reform the Government and Conſtitution upon Proteſtant principles, and ſtill to preſerve the *Proteſtant aſcendancy*, was all that, in preſent circumſtances, the ſtate of the kingdom would bear; and all that an enlightened benevolence would conſequently aim to accompliſh. A liberal and patriotic Proteſtant Government would undoubtedly relieve the Catholics from all poſitive penalties, and grant them a participation of all civil rights and privileges conſiſtent with a regard to its own ſafety. And in conſequence of the gradual and certain diffuſion of knowledge under

under a mild and beneficent government, there was good reaſon to hope that the time would at no very diſtant period arrive, when all diſtinctions might be ſafely and for ever extinguiſhed. The National Convention ſaw clearly the dilemma to which it was reduced: but they choſe what appeared to them the leaſt of the two evils; and rather than call in the aid of the great body of Catholics, without which their ſtrength was unequal to the conteſt, they ſubmitted quietly and tamely to the chaſtiſement of that Government whoſe authority they had inſulted, and in a manner defied: incurring by this means the cenſure of the moderate for their violence, and of the violent for their moderation.

The Parliament of Ireland adjourned for the Chriſtmas receſs, on the 22d of December (1783). Previous to their re-aſſembling, that memorable miniſterial revolution had taken place in England, which advanced Mr. Pitt to the helm of government, and the Duke of Rutland had in conſequence ſuperſeded the Earl of Northington in the Viceroyalty of Ireland.

On the 13th of March (1784) Mr. Flood renewed his motion, as it was hoped by the friends of parliamentary reform, under more favorable auſpices, the new Engliſh Miniſter having diſtinguiſhed himſelf as one of its moſt eloquent and zealous advocates. Mr. Yelverton having been

for his recent ſervices promoted to the high ſtation of Lord Chief Baron of the Court of Exchequer, Mr. Fitzgibbon, who ſucceeded him in the office of Attorney General, oppoſed the preſent motion with equal zeal; though he allowed that, as it now came before the Houſe in a regular and conſtitutional form, ſupported by numerous petitions from different parts of the kingdom, it was entitled to reſpect and attention. On the ſecond reading it was nevertheleſs rejected on a diviſion, by 159 to 85 voices.

This final deciſion was received with ſecret ſatisfaction, by thoſe friends of reform who dreaded the emancipation of the Catholics as an evil yet greater than the permanent predominance of the preſent ſyſtem of influence and corruption. But the murmurs of the majority were diſtinctly heard. The Ulſter Volunteers, who had from the commencement of the buſineſs ſtood conſpicuous in the van, preſented on a ſubſequent occaſion an addreſs to their General, the Earl of Charlemont, expreſſing "their ſatisfaction at the decay of thoſe prejudices which had ſo long involved the nation in feud and diſunion—a diſunion, which, by LIMITING the RIGHTS of SUFFRAGE, and circumſcribing the number of their citizens, had in a great degree created and foſtered the ariſtocratic tyranny, the ſource of every grievance, and againſt which the public voice now unanimouſly exclaimed."

ed." The Earl of Charlemont, in reply, coldly profeſſed himſelf "free from every illiberal prejudice againſt the Catholics, but he could not refrain from the moſt ardent entreaties to the Volunteers, to deſiſt from a purſuit that would fatally clog and impede the proſecution of their favorite purpoſe; and beſought them not to indulge any opinion which muſt and would create diſunion." This anſwer being aſſiduouſly circulated throughout the kingdom, effectually cauſed, or moſt ſenſibly heightened, that diſunion which it profeſſed to deprecate. The object itſelf ſeemed now relinquiſhed in deſpair, and the triumph of the Court was complete.

The other grand object to which the attention of the kingdom of Ireland was at this period directed, related to the actual ſtate of her commerce. The free trade granted to the Iriſh nation had produced none of thoſe advantages reſpecting which ſhe had indulged ſuch ſanguine and credulous expectations. The manufacturers, and lower claſſes of the people in general, were expoſed to all the evils ariſing from the extremeſt indigence; and it began to be clearly perceived, that while the preſent ſyſtem of commercial intercourſe with England ſubſiſted, there was little proſpect of a favorable change in the ſituation of Ireland. While all Engliſh manufactures and commodities were imported at a trifling per-

centage

centage *ad valorem* into the Iriſh ports, duties amounting nearly to a prohibition were impoſed upon the produce or manufactures of Ireland, with ONE very important exception, that of LINEN, on the importation into England. The general voice of the people of Ireland now loudly called for PROTECTING DUTIES, in order to foſter the infant manufactures of that country, and to compel the inhabitants to conſume the produce of native ingenuity and induſtry.

On the 31ſt of March Mr. Gardiner, member for the county of Dublin, in an able ſpeech depicted the diſtreſſes of the kingdom, traced the cauſe, and pointed out the remedy. He contraſted the condition of the people of Ireland with that of the people of England. He aſked, "What was the reaſon of ſo vaſt a difference? Were Iriſhmen leſs capable by nature of earning a livelihood than their neighbors? Was there any diſadvantage in the nature of their climate, or was the ſituation of their country, a ſituation adapted to render them the general mart of Europe, ſuch as to prevent their proſperity? No people were more laborious, more ingenious, or more active. There was not any branch of manufacture in which they were encouraged, that they had not carried to an high degree of perfection. If then the evil did not ariſe from any of theſe cauſes, to what was it to be attributed, but to the vaſt importation of foreign

foreign articles, by which a home conſumption was denied, and their manufactures nipped in the bud? Mr. Gardiner therefore called upon the Houſe to copy the conduct of England, of France, and other commercial countries, by *protecting* their manufactures at home. From an adherence to the ſyſtem now recommended, England, notwithſtanding the preſſure of an immenſe debt of two hundred and forty millions, had attained to a pitch of greatneſs truly aſtoniſhing."

At the concluſion of his ſpeech, Mr. Gardiner moved for an high duty on woollens imported into the kingdom.—This, after a very warm debate, was negatived by a vaſt majority; and the whole ſyſtem of *protecting duties* ridiculed and reprobated as futile, viſionary, and pernicious. At the failure of this ſecond grand attempt at relief and reform, the diſappointment of the people kindled into rage, and the ſhort-lived popularity of the new Viceroy, founded on the extreme unpopularity in Ireland, no leſs than in England, of the preceding Coalition Miniſtry, was now in the ſpace of a month—*a little month*—entirely at an end.

Such was the ſtate of the metropolis at this period, that it was thought neceſſary to countermand the embarkation of ſeveral regiments deſtined to the Eaſt Indies, and to furniſh the garriſon of Dublin, conſiſting of about 4000 regular troops, with thirty rounds of powder and ball per

per man. Before the end of the ſeſſion an addreſs was unanimouſly voted by the Houſe of Commons to the Sovereign, repreſenting the diſtreſſed ſtate of the kingdom, and praying for the eſtabliſhment of a more advantageous ſyſtem of commerce between Ireland and Great-Britain; and on the 14th of May 1784 the Parliament was prorogued. The laſt meaſure adopted by this aſſembly ſeemed in ſome meaſure to calm the violence of the people, and to ſuſpend the effervescence of their anger and diſcontent.

On the 7th of June an extraordinary meeting of the aggregate body of the citizens of Dublin was convened by the Sheriffs, in which they came to ſeveral important reſolutions, declaratory of "the clear, original, and impreſcriptible right of the people of Ireland to a frequent election, and an equal repreſentation. They call upon the nation to unite with them in the meaſures neceſſary to its introduction, and in preſenting petitions to the King for a diſſolution of the exiſting Parliament. They aſſert, that the force of the State conſiſts in the union of the inhabitants—that an equal participation in ALL the rights of a man and a citizen was proper, henceforth, to engage all the members of the State to co-operate efficaciouſly for the greateſt general good. Finally, that it would be of the happieſt conſequence to the proſperity of the State, and the maintaining of civil liberty, to extend to

their brethren, the Roman Catholics, the RIGHT of SUFFRAGE *as fully as* was compatible with the maintenance of the PROTESTANT GOVERNMENT.

In an addreſs to the people of Ireland, they propoſe the election of five delegates from each county, city, and conſiderable town, to meet in Dublin, October 25 next enſuing, in NATIONAL CONGRESS. On the 9th of Auguſt, Reſolutions nearly ſimilar were agreed to at a general meeting of the Freeholders of the County of Dublin; and a petition was alſo voted by them to the King for a diſſolution of the preſent Parliament. On application being made to the Lord Lieutenant to tranſmit theſe petitions to England, his Grace without heſitation "declared it to be his duty ſo to do. At the ſame time he informed them that he ſhould not fail to accompany them with his entire diſapprobation, as they included unjuſt and indecent reflections upon the Laws and the Parliament of Ireland, and as they tended to foment fatal diſſenſions among the people."

The town of Belfaſt, diſtinguiſhed much more for its zeal than its diſcretion in the cauſe of liberty, nearly at the ſame time voted a petition of a nature moſt extraordinary, and in the higheſt degree exceptionable, to the King, which they tranſmitted to Mr. Pitt, in order to its being preſented by the Miniſter to the Sovereign. The prayer of the petition was, "That the King would

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be pleaſed to diſſolve the preſent, and to iſſue the writs neceſſary for the aſſembling of a new Parliament, ACCORDING to the PLAN of REPRESENTATION which ſhould be agreed upon in the NATIONAL CONGRESS of the 25th of October." Mr. Pitt in reply very calmly and forcibly remarked, "That he had undoubtedly been and ſtill continued a zealous friend to a reform in Parliament, but he muſt beg leave to ſay that he had been ſo on grounds very different from thoſe adopted in the petition. What was *there* propoſed he conſidered as tending to produce ſtill greater evils than any of thoſe which the friends of reform were deſirous to remedy. He had great concern in differing ſo widely on this ſubject from a body of men who profeſſed to be guided by motives of loyalty and reverence for the Conſtitution: but animated himſelf by the ſame motives, and ſincerely anxious for the proſperity and freedom of every part of the Britiſh Empire, he had thought it his duty to communicate to them his ſentiments with fairneſs and preciſion."

Conſcious of its ſtrength, notwithſtanding the extreme unpopularity of its meaſures, the Government of Ireland did not long content itſelf with a cold expreſſion of diſapprobation at the proceedings now in contemplation. The 20th of September had been fixed upon as the day for electing five delegates to repreſent the city of Dublin in

NATIONAL

NATIONAL CONGRESS. A ſhort time previous to the intended meeting, Mr. Fitzgibbon, the Attorney General, wrote a letter to the Sheriffs, "expreſſing his aſtoniſhment at having read a public ſummons ſigned by them for this purpoſe—and declaring them reſponſible for ſuch outrageous breach of their duty to the laws of their country, and ſignifying his reſolution to proceed officially againſt them." The Sheriffs, in a conſternation at this menace, refuſed to take any part in the buſineſs. After ſome embarraſſment and delay, five delegates were nevertheleſs choſen, and a reſolution paſſed, declaring the conduct of the Attorney General to be a violation of Magna Charta. The Attorney General, holding this reſolution in contempt, actually filed informations againſt the High Sheriffs of various counties, for convening and preſiding at ſimilar meetings. Notwithſtanding all obſtacles, the NATIONAL CONGRESS met on the 25th of October (1784). After a ſeſſion of three days only, finding their numbers on the return very incomplete, they adjourned to the 20th of January 1785; having previouſly paſſed ſeveral reſolutions, importing, that the appointment of that aſſembly, and the ſteps that had been taken, were in entire conformity with the Conſtitution of Ireland.

On the ſame day commenced the ſecond ſeſſion of the Parliament of Ireland; and in a ſhort time

Mr. Orde, Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, laid before the Houſe, in a ſeries of propoſitions, the grand commercial regulations digeſted, during the receſs, into a regular ſyſtem. There were two plans obviouſly and radically different, on which a permanent arrangement might be formed on the baſis of equality—1. A ſyſtem of mutual prohibition. 2. A ſyſtem of mutual admiſſion. The propoſitions, eleven in number, moved by Mr. Orde, were framed in conformity to the latter, and beyond compariſon the wiſer of theſe oppoſite ſyſtems.

An arrangement founded on the baſis of mutual prohibition, or, in the more favorite and faſhionable language, *of protecting duties*, would have been fatal to the great ſtaple manufactory of LINENS imported into England, not only duty-free, but with the poſitive advantage of a bounty. On the ſyſtem of prohibition Ireland would have been totally deprived of the Colonial traffic; and the city of Cork, the emporium of the kingdom, and the grand mart of the Weſt Indian and victualling trade, would have been precipitated from the height of proſperity into the depth of diſtreſs and ruin. It would have amounted to a virtual declaration of national enmity and hoſtility; and there was good reaſon to fear leſt Ireland ſhould have ſunk under the weight of ſo unequal and dangerous a competition.

lition. On the other hand, the ſyſtem of amicable equalization was open to very plauſible and even ſerious objections.

Such was the prodigious inferiority of Ireland in almoſt every branch of traffic, that were the high prohibitory importation duties repealed by England, there was but little ground to hope that Ireland would for many years to come find herſelf materially or ſenſibly benefited. It was urged by Mr. Flood and other members in the oppoſition, that the greater object was now about to be ſacrificed to the leſs; Ireland had aſked for bread, and England had given her a ſtone; ſhe had aſked for protecting duties, and ſhe was offered equalization; amid a parade of conceſſion the real *deſideratum* was withheld. This might be compared to the procedure of a certain company of ſtrolling players, who advertiſed the tragedy of Hamlet, in which the part of Hamlet was by particular deſire to be omitted. By the propoſed regulations Ireland was indeed at liberty to ſend her woollens to Leeds and Halifax, and her coals to Sunderland and Newcaſtle. England would not ſuffer, even under the new ſyſtem, the exportation of her raw wool to Ireland; but then Ireland was at liberty, when the quality of her wool was improved, and the price lowered, to retaliate, by prohibiting the exportation of Iriſh wool to England—and this was called equality. The ſtarving woollen manufacturer of Ireland was

in the mean time left to perish; and if he presumed to complain, he was told that he ought to rest satisfied, for that the linen manufacture would under the new system flourish more than ever.

By the last proposition it was resolved, "that whatever sum the gross hereditary revenue of the kingdom should produce above the amount of the regular peace establishment, should be appropriated towards the support of the naval force of the EMPIRE, in such manner as the Parliament of Ireland shall direct." This was inveighed against as a palpable collusion—an artifice by which a revenue was to be raised in Ireland, to be afterwards applied to the advantage of Great Britain. Had England, it was asked, ever entered into a war on the account of Ireland? Had she ever equipped a ship more than she would have done had Ireland been sunk into the abysses of the ocean? Were Ireland entirely independent of and unconnected with England, it was forcibly asserted that the Minister who should form a treaty of commerce with England on the foundation of these resolutions, would deserve to be impeached for sacrificing the essential interests of Ireland. In the heat and passion of debate, it was affirmed to be fortunate for Mr. Orde that he was at present in a civilized country; had he brought forward his plan in a Polish Diet, he would not have lived to carry back his answer.

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Notwithſtanding theſe reaſonings and invectives, the good ſenſe and moderation of the Houſe were well ſatisfied with the conceſſions made by England, ſo far ſurpaſſing what the moſt ſanguine expectation a few years ſince could have ventured to indulge. The propoſitions were received not only with approbation, but with joyful applauſe, and were ultimately ratified by a very deciſive majority of the Houſe. In the mean time the NATIONAL CONGRESS had continued its ſittings almoſt unregarded. In a brief and final addreſs to the people of Ireland, this aſſembly obſerved, "that if the abuſes of former Parliaments did not inſpire a diſtruſt of thoſe which were to come—if the venerable opinion of thoſe illuſtrious men who were now no more, and the aſſiſtance of thoſe whoſe preſent labors co-operated with them in the ſame purſuit, had no influence to awaken their fears, to animate their efforts, and to invigorate their hopes, this and every other endeavor muſt ſink into oblivion; and they would ſhortly repoſe in indolent acquieſcence, under ſuch a repreſentation as would gall themſelves and their poſterity with increaſing taxes and oppreſſions."

After long delay Mr. Flood, on the 12th of May (1785), preſented once more his Bill for effecting a Reform in the Repreſentation, ſomewhat varied from that of the laſt year. A previous motion of the ſame ſenator, "that it be an inſtruction

to the Committee appointed to prepare the bill, that no borough in the province of Connaught having leſs than forty, or in the other provinces having leſs than ſeventy electors, ſhould be permitted to return more than one Member to Parliament," was negatived without a diviſion. On the introduction of the bill Mr. Brownlow obſerved, "that he greatly doubted indeed whether there was virtue enough in that Houſe to paſs the bill; but whatever might be its fate, he would be bold to affirm, that ſooner or later the reform ſo repeatedly denied WOULD and MUST be given." Mr. Flood remarked, "that when his firſt Bill of Reform was preſented to that Houſe, the objection was, that it was preſented on the point of a bayonet—the *air-drawn dagger* of Macbeth had appeared to the affrighted imagination and conſcience of the Houſe. Theſe apprehenſions had at length ſubſided; a more favorable treatment might now therefore be reaſonably expected. At leaſt he called on the Houſe to permit the printing of the bill, that the voice of the public might be heard reſpecting it; and not, like mutes in a ſeraglio, to ſtrangle it on that day while in the act of challenging a fair and free trial and diſcuſſion." The bill was nevertheleſs with little ceremony rejected, on a diviſion of 112 to 60 voices.

It is now proper to revert to the ſtate of affairs in England. On the 24th of January (1785) the

ſeſſion was opened with a ſpeech from the Throne, the principal feature of which was the recommendation of the King to the two Houſes of Parliament, "to apply their earneſt attention to the adjuſtment of ſuch points in the commercial intercourſe between Great Britain and Ireland as are not yet finally arranged." The firſt buſineſs which attracted the notice of the Houſe of Commons was the ſtate of the Weſtminſter Scrutiny, which had now exiſted for a period of eight months. In this time two pariſhes only had been ſcrutinized—the reſult was, that 105 votes had been ſtruck off the poll of Mr. Fox, and 87 from that of Sir Cecil Wray, the examination of which was not yet cloſed. Fifteen pariſhes more remained for future inveſtigation, ſo that there exiſted but little apparent probability that the queſtion relative to the return would be decided before the next general election. The miſerable imbecility of what was now for the firſt time dignified by the appellation of the COURT OF SCRUTINY, was expoſed in the moſt ſarcaſtic and contemptuous terms. The High Bailiff had no power to ſummon witneſſes, to impoſe an oath, or to commit for contumacy. The ſcrutiny was evidently a mere perſonal act of reviſion, and the High Bailiff himſelf declared that he acted under the ſole authority of the reſolution of that Houſe.

Mr. Pitt, however, condeſcended to vindicate the proceedings of this mock judicature, and main-

tained with unaltered countenance, "that the expediency of the ſcrutiny was amply juſtified by the experiment." Mr. Fox, with generous and indignant warmth, replied, "that he well remembered the day when he congratulated the Houſe on the acquiſition of Mr. Pitt's ſplendid abilities; it had been his pride to fight in conjunction with him the battles of the Conſtitution; he had been ever ready to recognize in the Right Hon. Gentleman a formidable rival, who would leave him far behind in the purſuit of glory—but he had never expected that this rival would become his perſecutor. He thought he had poſſeſſed an elevation of mind wholly incompatible with ſo low and grovelling a paſſion. He conſidered the preſent meaſure with regard to Weſtminſter, as a *ſuccedaneum* to expulſion. The caſe of the Middleſex election, ſo much reprobated, had at leaſt the merit of being more manly; for the procedure now adopted accompliſhed the ſame end of expulſion, without daring to exhibit any charge againſt the perſon expelled."

The motion of Mr. Welbore Ellis, "that the High Bailiff do attend at the bar of this Houſe," was at length negatived, February 9, (1785) by a majority of 174 to 135 voices. This being ſuch a majority as by no means diſcouraged future efforts, a ſimilar motion was ſoon after made by Colonel Fitzpatrick; this was negatived by a majority of nine voices only. And on the 3d of March, being a

third

third time repeated by Mr. Alderman Sawbridge, it was carried in the affirmative, ayes 162, noes 124; leaving the Miniſter, and the veteran phalanx of courtiers and *King's friends*, in one of the moſt diſgraceful minorities ever known in the Britiſh Houſe of Commons.

Mr. Fox now as Member for Weſtminſter moved to expunge the reſolutions of the 8th of June laſt, relative to this buſineſs, from the Journals of the Houſe; but the Miniſter, now ſeriouſly alarmed, ſummoned all his ſtrength to oppoſe this attempt to redeem the honor of the Houſe thus wilfully and wantonly degraded; and on a diviſion it was carried in the negative, ayes 139, noes 244. Fortunately for Mr. Pitt, the public attention was quickly turned to another and higher ſubject of political diſcuſſion, in which he appeared in a light far different—ſuch indeed as tended to revive in his favor all the former flattering prepoſſeſſions of thoſe who viewed the late proceedings in Parliament with inexpreſſible regret and aſtoniſhment.

On the 18th of April (1785) Mr. Pitt brought forward his final plan for a reform in the repreſentation, in ſome degree varying from his preceding attempts, and in all reſpects guarded, temperate, and judicious. "He roſe, he ſaid, with hopes infinitely more ſanguine than he had ventured to entertain at any former period. There never was a moment when the minds of men were more en-

lightened on this intereſting topic, or more prepared for its diſcuſſion. He declared his preſent plan of reform to be perfectly coincident with the ſpirit of thoſe changes which had taken place in the exerciſe of the elective franchiſe from the earlieſt ages, and not in the leaſt allied to the *ſpirit of innovation*. So far back as the reign of Edward I. before which the component orders of the repreſentative body could not be diſtinctly traced, the franchiſe of election had been conſtantly fluctuating. As one borough decayed and another flouriſhed, the firſt was aboliſhed and the ſecond inveſted with the right. Even the repreſentation of the counties had not been uniform. King James I. in his firſt proclamation for calling a parliament, directed that the Sheriffs ſhould not call upon ſuch decayed and ruined Boroughs to ſend Members to that Parliament. For this diſcretion, as veſted in the Crown, he was certainly no advocate; but he wiſhed to eſtabliſh a permanent rule to operate like the diſcretion out of which the Conſtitution had ſprung—that the principle on which it was founded ſhould be reſcued from the accident and caprice in which it was unhappily involved. He wiſhed to bring forward a plan that ſhould be complete, gradual, and permanent; a plan that not only corrected the inequalities of the preſent ſyſtem, but which would be competent to preſerve the purity it reſtored, and give to the Conſtitution not only conſiſtency,

consistency, but, if possible, immortality. It was his design that the actual number of the House of Commons should be preserved inviolate. His immediate object was to select a certain number of the decayed and rotten boroughs, the right of representation attached to thirty-six of which should be transferred to the counties, in such proportions as the wisdom of Parliament might prescribe; and that all unnecessary harshness might be avoided, he recommended the appropriation of a fund of one million to be applied to the purchasing of the franchise of such boroughs, on their voluntary application to Parliament. When this was effected, he proposed to extend the bill to the purchasing the franchise of other boroughs, besides the original thirty-six; and to transfer the right of returning Members to large towns, hitherto unrepresented, upon their petitioning Parliament to be indulged with this privilege."

The other most important particulars of Mr. Pitt's plan were the admitting of copyholders to an equality with freeholders, and the extending the franchise in populous towns, where the electors were few, to the inhabitants in general. The result of this plan was to give one hundred Members to the popular interest in the kingdom, and to extend the right of election to one hundred thousand persons, who, by the existing provisions of the law, were excluded from it. This was a very wise and excellently

lently digeſted plan, which did great honor to the framer; and the eloquence, ability, and vigor, with which it was ſupported, left no reaſonable ground of doubt as to the ſincerity with which it was brought forward.

The moſt important animadverſion in the courſe of the debate to which this motion gave riſe, was made by Mr. Fox, who, juſtly remarking "that government was not a property, but a truſt," ſtrongly objected to the idea of purchaſing franchiſes of boroughs, which from their inſignificance were no longer entitled to ſend Members to Parliament—"whatever was given for conſtitutional purpoſes ſhould be reſumed when thoſe purpoſes were no longer anſwered." With this and ſome other leſs important exceptions, Mr. Fox beſtowed upon the plan of the Miniſter a very juſt and liberal tribute of praiſe; and it yet remains a doubt, whether, upon the ground of *expediency*, Mr. Pitt was not fully juſtified in propoſing that regulation which the more unaccommodating and decided policy of Mr. Fox diſdained to approve.

On the other hand, the whole plan was reprobated and ridiculed by Mr. Powys, as "the mere knight-errantry of a political Quixote. It was an example, a precedent, an incitement, to the wildeſt and moſt paradoxical *noſtrums* that ſpeculative theoriſts could deviſe. They got by it what Archimedes wanted—a foundation for their inventions—a *fulcrum*

a *fulcrum* from which they could throw the Parliament and Conſtitution of England into the air. He could not contemplate it with any degree of patience. He ſhould not treat it, therefore, with the ceremony of calling for the order of the day; but as its purpoſes were ſo hoſtile to the Conſtitution, ſo menacing and unqualified, he would meet the queſtion in front by giving it a direct and unequivocal contradiction." It cannot be ſuppoſed, owing to the ſuperior force of ſuch *arguments* as theſe, that on a diviſion, after a long-protracted debate, the bill was rejected by a majority of 248 to 174 voices.

In conſequence of the very able reports preſented from time to time by the Commiſſioners of Accounts appointed by Act of Parliament, Mr. Pitt in the courſe of the preſent ſeſſion brought in three ſeveral bills, for the better auditing and examining the public accounts, and for the regulation and reform of the public offices, which paſſed both Houſes with much applauſe, and no material oppoſition. The balances of the Navy and Ordnance Offices were by theſe bills ordered, as thoſe of the Paymaſter of the Forces by a former regulation, to be paid into the Bank. The antient mode of proceeding by the Auditors of the Impreſt was aboliſhed as wholly frivolous and nugatory, though the perquiſites of the Auditors were eſtimated at no leſs than 34,000l. annually in times of peace, and dur-

ing

ing the war they had riſen to a height incredibly enormous. A new and efficient commiſſion of examination and control was inſtituted; many of the inferior departments of office, or heads of ſervice, were conſolidated; and the whole now aſſumed the appearance of a regular and rational ſyſtem.

The remaining part of the floating arrear of debt, conſiſting of navy bills and ordnance debentures, was now funded on five per cent. ſtock; and the intereſt, amounting to above four hundred thouſand pounds per annum, was provided by freſh taxes; one of which, a tax on retail ſhops, calculated at one hundred and twenty thouſand pounds per annum, proved ſingularly obnoxious. It was ſaid to be, under a new denomination, neither more nor leſs than a partial houſe tax; and the whole body of retail traders were univerſally agreed, that it was utterly impracticable, for obvious reaſons, to indemnify themſelves by raiſing the price of their different commodities upon the conſumer. By way of recompenſe or *douceur* to the ſhopkeeper, Mr. Pitt propoſed, by a deed of unprecedented oppreſſion, proceeding certainly from prejudice or inattention rather than any fixed malignity of deſign, to revoke and take away the licenſe from all *hawkers and pedlars*, whom he ſtyled "a peſt to the community, and a nurſery and medium for the preſervation of illicit trade."

That

That this claſs of traders were engaged in, and derived their chief ſupport from, illicit practices, was a very heavy and ſerious charge, and ought to have been clearly proved at the bar of the Houſe, in order to have juſtified a meaſure of ſuch unexampled ſeverity, and of a nature ſo highly penal. Far from being the *peſts* of ſociety, an impartial and diſintereſted perſon can diſcern in theſe itinerant traders, only an induſtrious claſs of men, who purſue an occupation perfectly innocent in itſelf, and highly uſeful to the inhabitants of ſmall towns and villages, who would otherwiſe find it difficult to procure the various articles of merchandize with which they are thus occaſionally ſupplied. Upon what principle of equity or juſtice any government could exerciſe the power of preventing theſe people from enjoying the fruits of their honeſt labor, and of devoting them to remedileſs ruin, it is ſurely difficult, or rather impoſſible, to diſcover.

Mr. Fox, ſtruck with the inhumanity and utter indefenſibility of the propoſed regulation, generouſly and powerfully pleaded, in conjunction with Mr. Dempſter, Mr. Courtenay, and other Gentlemen, though with very incomplete ſucceſs, in behalf of this friendleſs and unprotected deſcription of men. In the reſult, the prohibition was changed to a heavy duty, which combined with other ſevere reſtrictions would, *it was hoped,* effect the ſame ultimate

timate purpoſe. "Had we been informed," ſays a very intelligent and truly philanthropic writer (Lord Gardenſtone), ſpeaking of this prohibitory regulation, "that Nadir Sha, or any other oriental deſpot, had invented a tax for the purpoſe of exterminating the object of it, we ſhould naturally have exclaimed, that this was the extremity of oppreſſion." The principle of this bill was in the courſe of the debate truly affirmed by Mr. Dempſter to be no leſs iniquitous than that of the expulſion of the Moriſcoes from Spain, or of the Huguenots from France.

But the ſubject which chiefly engaged the attention of Parliament during the preſent ſeſſion was, the projected plan of commercial intercourſe with Ireland. In the opening of this important buſineſs, Mr. Pitt made ſome excellent obſervations on "the ſpecies of policy which had been long exerciſed by the Engliſh government in regard to Ireland, the object of which was, to debar her from the enjoyment and uſe of her own reſources, and to make her completely ſubſervient to the intereſt and opulence of this country. Some relaxation of this ſyſtem had taken place indeed at an early period of the preſent century;—more had been done in the reign of King George II. but it was not till within a very few years that the ſyſtem had been completely reverſed. Still however the future intercourſe between the two kingdoms

doms remained for legiſlative wiſdom to arrange; and the PROPOSITIONS moved by Mr. Orde in the Iriſh Parliament, and ratified by that aſſembly, held out, he ſaid, a ſyſtem liberal, beneficial, and permanent*. If the queſtion ſhould be aſked, whether,

* Theſe famous Propoſitions, eleven in number, were in purport and ſubſtance, and diveſted of their technical form, as follows:

I. That it is the opinion of this Committee, that it is highly important to the general intereſt of the Britiſh empire, that the trade between Great Britain and Ireland be encouraged and extended as much as poſſible, and for that purpoſe, that the intercourſe and commerce be finally ſettled and regulated on permanent and equitable principles for the mutual benefit of both countries.

II. That all articles, *not* the growth or manufacture of Great Britain or Ireland, ſhould be imported into each kingdom from the other, reciprocally, at the ſame duties to which they are liable when imported directly from the place of their product; and that all duties originally paid on the importation into either country reſpectively, ſhall be fully drawn back on exportation to the other.

III. That no prohibition ſhould exiſt in either country againſt the importation of any article of the other, and that the duty on importation ſhould be preciſely the ſame in both countries, except where an addition may be neceſſary in conſequence of an internal duty on any ſuch article of its own conſumption.

IV. That where the duties on articles of the product of either country are different on the importation into the other, they ſhould be reduced where they are higheſt to the amount payable in the other; and that all ſuch articles ſhould be exportable from the kingdom into which they ſhall be imported as free from

whether, under the accumulation of our heavy taxes, it would be wise to equalize the duties, and to enable a country free from those taxes to meet us in their own market and in ours, he would answer, that Ireland, with an independent Legislature, would no longer submit to be treated with inferiority. A great and generous effort was to be made by this country, and we were to choose between

from duty, as the similar commodities or home manufacture of the same kingdom.

V. That in all cases where either kingdom shall charge articles of its own consumption with an internal duty; the same articles, when imported from the other, may be charged with a duty adequate to countervail the internal duty.

VI. That no prohibition or new duty shall hereafter be imposed in either kingdom on the *importation* of any article the product of the other, except such additional duties as may be requisite to countervail the duties on internal consumption.

VII. That no prohibitions or new duties shall be hereafter imposed on the *exportation* of any article of native growth, except such as either kingdom may think expedient from time to time, upon corn, meal, malt, flour, and biscuit; and also, except where there now exists any prohibition not reciprocal, or duty not equal; in every such case, the prohibition may be made reciprocal, or the duties raised so as to make them equal.

VIII. That no bounties whatever should be payable in either kingdom on the exportation of any article to the other, except such as relate to corn, meal, malt, flour, and biscuits, and such as are in the nature of drawbacks or compensation for duties paid; and that no bounty should be granted in Ireland on the exportation of any article imported from the British plantations,

between inevitable alternatives. Our manufactures however were so decidedly superior to theirs, that the immunities proposed would be in fact, and for many years to come, productive of little alteration. It would require time for the acquisition of both capital and skill; and as these increased, the difference between the price of labor there and in this country would be incessantly diminishing. After all, there might, he admitted, be some branches of manufacture in which Ireland might rival and perhaps excel England. But

tions, unless in cases where a similar bounty is payable in Britain; or where such bounty is merely in the nature of a drawback or compensation for duties paid internally, over and above any duties paid thereon in Britain.

IX. That the importation of articles from foreign States should be regulated in each kingdom, so as to afford an effectual preference to similar articles of the growth and produce of the other.

X. That it is essential to the commercial interests of Ireland, to prevent as much as possible an accumulation of national debt; that therefore it is highly expedient that the annual revenue of this kingdom shall be made equal to its annual expence.

XI. That whatever sum the gross hereditary revenue of the kingdom, after deducting all drawbacks, repayments, or bounties granted in the nature of drawbacks, shall produce above the sum of six hundred and fifty-six thousand pounds in each year of peace, wherein the annual revenue shall equal the annual expence, and in each year of war, without regard to such equality, should be appropriated towards the support of the naval force of the empire, in such manner as the Parliament of Ireland shall direct.

this ought not to give us pain. We muſt calculate from general and not from partial views. Above all, we ſhould learn not to regard Ireland with an eye of jealouſy. It required little philoſophy to reconcile us to a competition which would give us a rich cuſtomer inſtead of a poor one. The proſperity of the ſiſter kingdom would be a freſh and inexhauſtible ſource of opulence to us."

Theſe comprehenſive and liberal ideas, ſo oppoſite to the wiſdom and policy of paſt ages, were on this great and intereſting occaſion received by the Britiſh Houſe of Commons with general complacency and approbation, and by the Public at large with apparent tranquillity and acquieſcence. The vaſtneſs of the plan, and the multiplicity and complexity of the objects which it embraced, ſeemed to keep the public mind in a kind of ſuſpenſe; and for near a month after its firſt introduction, there were no indications diſcernible of ſerious or determined oppoſition. Mr. Fox, indeed, at the onſet of the buſineſs, commenced the attack, by ſarcaſtically obſerving, that by far the greater part of Mr. Pitt's ſpeech was little elſe than a reply to that of Mr. Orde in the Iriſh Houſe of Commons. In Ireland, the Propoſitions had been ſtated as in the higheſt degree advantageous to that country; as rendering it the emporium of Europe, and the ſource and ſupply of the Britiſh markets. Here the great recommendation

mendation of the ſyſtem was, that the benefits accruing to Ireland were, if not wholly viſionary, at beſt trivial and remote;—that Ireland could not rival England;—that ſhe was poor and feeble, and would very long in all probability remain ſo. He muſt, however, do Mr. Orde the juſtice to acknowledge, that his arguments were far the moſt ſolid and convincing. As to the report of the Privy Council, to whom the conſideration of this buſineſs had been previouſly referred, Mr. Fox remarked, "that a queſtion which appeared to him of primary importance had been entirely overlooked by them; he meant the propriety and policy of permitting the produce of Africa and America to be brought into Great Britain through Ireland. By this meaſure, we threw down the whole fabric of our Navigation Laws. The period was not very diſtant when the Charter of the Eaſt India Company would expire; and, according to the tenor of the reſolutions now propoſed, there remained no power in this country to renew it with the ſame, or indeed any excluſive privileges. Mr. Fox cenſured the precipitancy with which this buſineſs was urged, and contended for the neceſſity of calling the merchants and manufacturers to the bar of the Houſe, in order that the Houſe might be fully informed in a caſe of this momentous nature, before they proceeded to vote a definitive reſolution."

On the 14th of March, Mr. Eden moved, that the Commiſſioners of Cuſtoms and Exciſe ſhould be examined at the bar of the Houſe; which was carried in the affirmative.

On the ſame day, a petition was preſented by Mr. Stanley, member for Lancaſhire, from the manufacturers of that county, praying to be heard by Counſel againſt the bill. Petitions were likewiſe preſented from Liverpool, Glaſgow, and Mancheſter. The malign ſpirit of commercial jealouſy appeared to be at length thoroughly awakened, and petitions upon petitions were ſent up to Parliament, in incredible numbers, from every quarter of the kingdom. At the end of a long and tedious inveſtigation of facts and examination of witneſſes, Mr. Pitt was reluctantly compelled to acknowledge the neceſſity of making ſome material alterations and amendments in his original plan.

On the 12th of May 1785, Mr. Pitt brought forward, in conſequence of the additional lights thus thrown upon the buſineſs, a ſeries of Propoſitions, ſo altered, modified, and enlarged, as to exhibit in its new form what might well be conſidered as a new ſyſtem.

Mr. Fox, in the language of triumph, congratulated the Houſe on the happy eſcape they had made from the ſyſtem propoſed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer but two months ſince; all oppoſition

poſition to which was then treated as the effect of faction and diſappointment. " If," ſaid Mr. Fox, " the original reſolutions had paſſed, we ſhould have loſt for ever the monopoly of the Eaſt India trade; we muſt have hazarded all the revenue ariſing from ſpirituous liquors; we ſhould have ſacrificed the whole of the Navigation Laws of this country. If theſe reſolutions had paſſed into a law, we ſhould have riſqued the loſs of the Colonial market for the manufactures of Great Britain, and incurred the moſt extenſive danger to the Colonies themſelves; we ſhould have left it in the power of Ireland to draw a revenue from our conſumption. The juſt alarm of the Miniſter on the ſubject of the Navigation Laws," Mr. Fox ſaid, " ſufficiently appeared from the extraordinary nature of the remedy he had thought it expedient to adopt, which was no other than to aſſert that, notwithſtanding the independence of Ireland, ſhe muſt ſtill in commercial laws and external legiſlation be governed by Britain." Mr. Fox affirmed, " that the wild ſcheme of extravagant ſpeculation comprized in the reſolutions, did not originate with the Iriſh nation. A ſtranger had been ſent thither to offer a *noſtrum* of his own invention for the relief of a diſordered State. For the irritation and ill humor exiſting in that country, Miniſters were reſponſible. The violences which they committed in Ireland merited

the moſt deciſive and general reprobation. Their attacks on the liberty of the preſs;—their endeavors to prevent legal meetings for the purpoſe of deliberating on the beſt means of reforming the national repreſentation;—their proceedings againſt men by ſummary attachments, were meaſures which might well be ſuppoſed to inflame the minds of the people of Ireland. Now imprudent inſult was to be compenſated by imprudent conceſſion. But let the Houſe beware of a deſign ſo inſidious and ruinous as that of a commutation of Engliſh commerce for Iriſh ſlavery. The Propoſitions, as they were even now modified, were far too complicated and extenſive to be voted by the majority of the members of that Houſe, on any other ground than that of confidence in the Miniſter: and ſurely the Right Honorable Gentleman had ſufficiently demonſtrated, that implicit confidence in him was as dangerous as it was abſurd; that infallibility was no more his prerogative, than that of the reſt of the world." The Houſe at length divided on the motion of adjournment, ayes 155, noes 281; and at eight o'clock in the morning, the firſt reſolution, broken into two diſtinct propoſitions in the new arrangement, paſſed the Houſe. The remaining reſolutions were ſubſequently carried after an obſtinate conteſt; and on the 30th of May they were carried up to the Houſe of Lords.

Here

Here they were again the ſubject of long and laborious inveſtigation; in the courſe of which the Lords Stormont and Loughborough chiefly diſtinguiſhed themſelves on the part of Oppoſition. Various amendments, though not of very material import, were offered and received by the Houſe. In the progreſs of the buſineſs, the Earl of Shelburne, recently created Marquis of Lanſdowne, made a remarkable ſpeech, which, though not unfavorable to the meaſure before the Houſe, clearly manifeſted how little cordiality ſubſiſted between that Nobleman and the preſent Miniſter, notwithſtanding their former intimate political connection;—ſo frail are the friendſhips and ſo tranſient the attachments of Stateſmen!—The Marquis entered into a very maſterly ſurvey of the conſtruction and general effect of the propoſed arrangement. He declared "the reſult of his enquiry to be very oppoſite to that of the merchants and manufacturers, however reſpectable, who had been examined at their Lordſhips' bar. Though much valuable information might doubtleſs be derived from their evidence, it muſt not be forgotten that they were men peculiarly ſubject to prejudice and error, in all caſes where their perſonal intereſt was concerned. Were any one, for inſtance, to aſk a manufacturer of Halifax, 'what was the greateſt crime upon earth? was it felony, was it murder, was it parricide?' he

would anſwer, 'No—none of theſe; it was the exporting of WOOL*.' His Lordſhip declared himſelf of opinion, that the unlimited commerce of Ireland would not create a formidable competition to England. Ireland, deſtitute as ſhe was of the grand materials for ſhip-building, timber, and iron, was incapable of the carrying trade, and had little capital. Theſe were diſadvantages not to be eaſily or ſpeedily ſurmounted. The noble Lord ſaid, he was himſelf recently arrived from the groves of Bowood, and had not entered into any accurate or minute inveſtigation of this buſineſs. But Miniſters muſt have been loſt in the moſt criminal infatuation, if they had not prepared this great ſyſtem with due and proper deliberation—if they had not made themſelves maſters of its bearings and tendencies. He placed the utmoſt reliance on the integrity and abilities of *the Nobleman now at the head of affairs in Ireland*,

* When the famous Colbert applied to the principal merchants in France, to know what regulations would be beſt calculated to improve the manufactures and extend the commerce of the kingdom, the anſwer he obtained from them was, "*Laiſſez nous faire*,"—Let us alone. Nevertheleſs, that great Miniſter, who ſaw things, not through the diſtorted medium of perſonal intereſt, but with the clear diſcernment and comprehenſive beneficence of a Stateſman and a Patriot, is now univerſally allowed, by his "wild and viſionary ſpeculations," as they were then doubtleſs ſtyled, to have laid the foundation of the commercial grandeur and proſperity of France.

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and on thoſe of his Secretary. He was certain *they* would not diſgrace themſelves in a tranſaction to which they were in every reſpect equal. Delay he knew to be dangerous, ſomething deciſive muſt be done. If this were not the proper meaſure, what was to be ſubſtituted? Plauſible objections might no doubt be adduced. It might be urged, that the preſent ſyſtem would be acceptable in neither kingdom;—that the author of it was too young, and was ignorant of what ſhould conſtitute a Miniſter;—that if others more competent to this taſk had remained longer in office, things would have been better and more ſatisfactorily ſettled. It might be ſaid, 'How, in the name of God, did this man contrive to elevate himſelf to the rank of a Miniſter?' We muſt however take things as we found them. The moſt ſerious intereſts of both countries were at ſtake, and the moſt alarming conſequences might attend the poſtponement of this buſineſs."

The Iriſh reſolutions were ſent from the Lords to the Commons the 19th of July 1785. After much freſh and eager debate, the amendments of their Lordſhips were agreed to by the Commons; and on the 28th of July an Addreſs was preſented to the King by both Houſes of Parliament, acquainting his Majeſty with the ſteps which had been taken in this affair; adding, "that it remained for the Parliament of Ireland to judge of the conditions according

cording to their wiſdom and diſcretion, as well as of every other part of the ſettlement propoſed to be eſtabliſhed by mutual conſent." The two Houſes now adjourned themſelves to a diſtant day; and on the 30th of September 1785, the Parliament was prorogued by royal proclamation.

The amended Propoſitions having been tranſmitted to Ireland, Mr. Orde, on the 12th of Auguſt, moved for leave to bring in a bill for eſtabliſhing the ſyſtem of commercial intercourſe therein contained. This Miniſter defended the variations that now appeared, by alleging the natural progreſs of a meaſure of this nature. Ireland had, in the early part of the ſeſſion, ſtated what ſhe had thought herſelf entitled to claim, and Britain in return had declared what ſhe was willing to concede. Mr. Orde averred, that the amendments made by the Britiſh Parliament to the original propoſitions did not in reality interfere with the proſperity of Ireland. Wiſhing, however, to follow the example of mature deliberation given by England, it was his intention, after bringing in the bill and printing it, to pauſe, in order to learn the ſentiments of the country reſpecting it. Let the Houſe receive every petition that could be brought;—let them liſten to all the evidence that could be offered. On a compariſon of the two ſets of propoſitions, the magnitude and importance of the alterations ſtrikingly appeared. By

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the third of the Engliſh reſolutions, Ireland was virtually interdicted, even after the expiration of the charter of the Eaſt India Company, from exporting articles to England, the growth and produce of any of the countries beyond the Cape of Good Hope to the Straits of Magellan. By the ſame reſolution, this interdiction was extended to arrack and foreign brandy; alſo to rums and other ſtrong waters not imported from the Britiſh colonies in the Weſt Indies. By the fourth reſolution, it was declared to be highly eſſential that the laws for regulating trade and navigation ſhould be the ſame in both countries; and, for that purpoſe, that all laws which have been made, OR SHALL BE MADE, in Great Britain, ſecuring excluſive privileges to the ſhips and mariners of Great Britain, Ireland, and the Britiſh colonies and plantations, and for regulating and reſtraining the trade of the Britiſh colonies and plantations, ſuch laws impoſing the ſame reſtraints, and conferring the ſame benefits, on the ſubjects of both kingdoms, ſhould be in force in Ireland, BY LAWS to be paſſed by the PARLIAMENT of that kingdom, for the SAME TIME and in the SAME MANNER as in GREAT BRITAIN. By the fifth reſolution, this legiſlative power of regulation and control was in like manner extended to all goods and commodities imported into Ireland from the Britiſh or foreign colonies in Africa and America.

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By the ſixth and ſeventh reſolutions, the commercial intercourſe between the two kingdoms was incumbered with many burdenſome and rigorous regulations reſpecting bonds, cockets, certificates, &c. in order effectually to repreſs all illicit practices apprehended from the circuitous commerce granted to Ireland. By the eighth, the regulating power of Britain is extended to all goods exported from Ireland to the Britiſh colonies in the Weſt Indies, America, or the coaſt of Africa. By the ninth, Ireland is excluded, ſo long as the charter of the Eaſt India Company ſhall exiſt, from trading to any port beyond the Cape of Good Hope to the Straits of Magellan; and during the continuance of the ſaid charter, no goods of the growth, produce, or manufacture of India ſhall be allowed to be imported into Ireland but through Great Britain. By the fifteenth reſolution, the bounties allowed by Great Britain on the exportation of beer to Ireland, and ſpirits diſtilled from corn, are expreſsly continued. By the ſixteenth, it is provided, that all goods the produce of the Nortl American States, which are ſubject to higher duties on importation into Great Britain, than the like goods the produce of the Britiſh colonies—ſuch articles ſhall be ſubject to the ſame duties on importation into Ireland.

Theſe were the grand and leading features of difference between the old propoſitions and the new;

new: and so great was the dissimilarity, that the Irish Parliament seemed scarcely to recognize the traces of its own original creation. A general sentiment of amazement and indignation seemed to pervade the House; and the FOURTH RESOLUTION in particular, by which England assumed a power of legislative regulation and commercial control with respect to Ireland, was rejected with a kind of horror.

Mr. Grattan, who had supported the Propositions in their primitive form, now exerted the whole force of his eloquence to expose them to the public scorn and detestation. "What," said this powerful orator, "is this pretended equitable arrangement but a plan to perpetuate to England all her advantages, and to Ireland all her disadvantages? Ireland is required to grant a monopoly of the trade of India to the present East India Company during its existence, and to Great Britain for ever after. This is not a surrender of the political rights of the country, but of the natural prerogatives of man—not of the privileges of Parliament, but of the rights of nations. They were not to sail beyond the Cape of Good Hope and the Straits of Magellan—an awful interdict! Other interdicts extended to a determined period of time, but here was an eternity of restraint. Other interdicts extended to particular places, for local reasons—but here regions of immense extent were indiscriminately

criminately forbidden, and the bounties which Providence had given they were prohibited to enjoy. It resembled a Judgment of God, rather than an Act of Legislature, whether they measured it by extent of space, or infinity of duration—and had nothing human about it except its presumption. The principle of equal duties and equal restrictions," Mr. Grattan said, " did not constitute an equality of participation, because the condition of the two countries was totally dissimilar. Supposing Great Britain, in order to answer the exigency of some future war, or to fund her present debt, should raise her colony duties still higher; Ireland must follow, not because she wanted the tax, but lest her exemption from taxes should give her manufactures any comparative advantage. Irish taxes were to be precautions against the prosperity of Irish manufactures. Nay, worse than this; the Propositions in question would make English jealousy the barometer of Irish taxes. The exclusion of foreign plantation produce would have seemed sufficient for every purpose of power and dominion; but, for the purpose of aggravation and insult, the independent States of America were most ungraciously brought into the arrangement, and expressly named as if North America continued a part of the British dominions. This was called a system of concession and compensation; but," said Mr. Grattan, " the people of Ireland,

Ireland, *without* compenſation, obtained a colony trade, a free trade, the government of their army, the extinction of the unconſtitutional powers of the Council, the reſtoration of the judicature of their Lords, and, finally, the independence of their Legiſlature. Let them ſee now what they obtain *by* compenſation:—A covenant not to trade beyond the Cape of Good Hope and the Straits of Magellan;—a covenant not to take foreign plantation produce,—not to take American produce but as Great Britain ſhall permit;—a covenant not to take Britiſh plantation produce but as Great Britain ſhould preſcribe;—a covenant never to protect their own manufactures, never to guard the *primum* of thoſe manufactures. Surely ſome God preſided over the welfare of Ireland, who made it wiſdom to fulfil their duty, and who annexed the penalties of folly as well as infamy to the ſurrender of their privileges. From the conſideration of commerce," ſaid this animated orator, "I proceed to a queſtion much more high, and ineſtimable—before which the ideas of protecting duties, of reciprocal duties, of countervailing duties, vaniſh into nothing; and by the tendencies of which, the prudence of every head and the energies of every heart are called forth to ſhield the newly-acquired rights of a nation ſo long depreſſed, and ſo recently and wonderfully emancipated. If any body of men could think the Iriſh Conſtitution incom-

patible with the unity of the Britiſh empire, a doctrine which he abjured as ſedition againſt both; he would anſwer, ‘ Periſh the Empire; live the Conſtitution!’ No transfer of legiſlative authority could be made. They, the limited truſtees of delegated power, born for a particular purpoſe, confined to a particular line, and bearing an inviolable relationſhip to the people who ſent them to Parliament, could not break that relationſhip, counteract that purpoſe, and ſurrender, diminiſh, or derogate from thoſe privileges they lived but to preſerve. The Propoſitions granted a perpetual money bill—a money bill to continue as long as Great Britain ſhall pleaſe, with a covenant to increaſe it as often as ſhe ſhall require. The trade and the purſe of the nation were alike in covenant. Paſs this bill, and they had no conſtituents; their conſtituents had no repreſentatives:—they were the mere regiſter of the Britiſh Parliament, and the equalizer of Britiſh duties. But have you traced the map of the globe? Have you marked there the countries, the right of trading to which you are to ſurrender for ever? Have you ſurveyed the ſettlements of the ſeveral European nations in Aſia, in Africa, in America? Have you conſidered the ſtate of North America—its preſent ſituation, its future growth, and every incident in the endleſs ſucceſſion of time that may attend that nurſe of commerce and ASYLUM of MANKIND? Are you competent

competent to declare, that a free trade to thoſe vaſt regions will never in the efflux of time tend to the advancement of the intereſts of Ireland? If you poſſeſs ſatisfactory information upon this ſubject, it muſt be by inſpiration, not by knowledge.—Let us then guard our free trade and free conſtitution as our only real reſources. They are the reſult of great virtue, of much perſeverance, and the ſource to this Houſe of immortal honor. Let us preſerve uncontaminated to the lateſt generations the dignity of Parliament, the majeſty of the People, and the imperial ſovereignty of the Iriſh crown and nation." The feelings of the Parliament and of the People of Ireland were on this ſubject in perfect uniſon. Scarcely could the great and acknowledged talents of Mr. Fitzgibbon obtain him any ſhare of attention when he roſe to ſpeak in vindication of a meaſure ſo ſupremely obnoxious. "If England relaxed her Navigation Laws in favor of I reland, ſhe had a right, Mr. Fitzgibbon affirmed, to expect to be followed by her in a code of laws which had been the ſource of her commercial opulence, and the baſis of her maritime ſtrength. It had been inſinuated, that they could trade to more advantage with the colonies of foreign States. But what foreign States would allow them to trade with their colonies? Who was to protect them if foreign States refuſed to do them juſtice? or who was to aſſert their rights,

ſuppoſing them to be violated? When an arrangement ſo advantageous was offered to Ireland, for what reaſon was it that ſhe heſitated and demurred? Becauſe ſhe is told that the treaty ſtruck at the independence of her legiſlature. But it is as an independent power that Ireland has negotiated. It is as to an independent power that the overtures of Britain are made. An arrangement of trade could not be agreed upon between two nations, unleſs they ſettled at the ſame time principles of mutual reſtriction; and if the Iriſh nation would never condeſcend to promiſe compliance with any condition of a treaty, ſhe muſt determine never to make any commercial treaty, or any treaty whatever." Mr. Fitzgibbon concluded a moſt able ſpeech, by remarking, "that whatever might have been intimated concerning the poſſibility of Ireland ſtanding alone, he was convinced, that, ſituated as ſhe was in the neighbourhood of powerful Popiſh countries, with a great majority of her people of the Popiſh religion, ſhe could not exiſt one hour as a Proteſtant State if the protection of England were withdrawn." After a vehement debate, in which both parties exerted their utmoſt ability and eloquence, the Houſe divided at nine in the morning upon the motion of Mr. Orde for leave to bring in the bill; ayes 127, noes 108. Such a diviſion in the firſt ſtage of the buſineſs was equivalent to a defeat;

feat: and on the Monday following, Mr. Orde moved the firſt reading of the bill and the printing it; declaring, that he did not intend to make any further progreſs in the buſineſs during the preſent ſeſſion. He had completed his duty reſpecting it. If it were revived, it muſt be by a motion from the public, who at the commencement of the enſuing ſeſſion might take ſuch further ſteps as they thought proper.

In order to preclude a motion of cenſure framed by Mr. Flood, the Secretary then moved an adjournment; and Mr. Flood conſenting, not without difficulty, to wave his motion, the adjournment was carried without a diviſion. Public illuminations teſtified the joy excited by the ſudden termination of this extraordinary buſineſs; and from this period no effort has been made in either kingdom to revive in any ſhape this important and intereſting diſcuſſion.

Upon the whole, though it might perhaps juſtly be regarded as too daring an experiment, the probability is, that a commercial treaty founded on the baſis of the original propoſitions would have proved very beneficial in practice. The prodigious inferiority of ſkill, of credit, and of capital, muſt have effectually prevented Ireland from becoming formidable as a competitor to England; and in proportion as Ireland advanced in opulence, her artificial wants would have increaſed, and conſequently

her conſumption of Britiſh manufactures and commodities.

Notwithſtanding the great alarm excited when the firſt commercial conceſſions were made to Ireland, no detriment was in fact ſuſtained by Great Britain: on the contrary, the trade to England continued rapidly to increaſe, even in regard to thoſe very articles which Ireland was allowed to import from the place of their growth and produce. From the year 1781 to the year 1784 muſcovado ſugars imported from the Weſt Indies roſe from 7,384 cwt. to 27,492 cwt.; and in the ſame term ſugars imported from Britain roſe from 130,056 to 160,083 cwt. Another remarkable fact is, that the linen manufacture both in England and Scotland has flouriſhed with conſtant and regular acceleration, notwithſtanding the unlimited competition of the Iriſh nation. According to a ſeven years average, ending A. D. 1755, not more than 576,373 yards were exported from England; and in the year 1771 the export amounted to no leſs than 4,411,040 yards. Why then might not a ſimilar competition be as ſafely and advantageouſly eſtabliſhed in other branches of commerce? Theſe arithmetical ſtatements ſhew to a demonſtration the extreme weakneſs and futility of thoſe fears and apprehenſions which are ſo apt to agitate the mercantile world at the ſlighteſt breath of innovation, and their total incompetency to deduce

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from a comprehenſive and impartial ſurvey of the whole ſyſtem, juſt and accurate concluſions. Conſidering, nevertheleſs, the narrow limits of the higheſt human ſagacity, it muſt be acknowledged that prudence would have dictated a temporary duration to this commercial arrangement, in order to bring the utility of it to the infallible touchſtone of experience. As to the fourth propoſition of the Engliſh ſeries, which was the immediate cauſe of the poſitive and peremptory rejection of the whole, it might in all probability have been very ſafely diſpenſed with, as there is no reaſon to doubt but that Ireland would have ſpontaneouſly adopted with good-faith and good-will any regulations neceſſary to enforce a treaty which ſhe found upon the whole conducive to her proſperity.

The Parliament of Great Britain, after a tranquil interval of a few months, met on the 24th of January 1786. In the ſpeech from the Throne the King declared to the Houſe of Commons his earneſt wiſh to enforce œconomy in every department; recommending to them the maintenance of our naval ſtrength on the moſt reſpectable footing; and above all the eſtabliſhment of a FIXED PLAN for the reduction of the NATIONAL DEBT. Nothing remarkable paſſed until about the middle of February, when the eſtimate of the ordnance was brought up in the Committee of Supply. Upon this occaſion Mr. Pitt called the attention of the

Houſe to the plan laid before them in the courſe of the laſt ſeſſion, under the ſanction of the Duke of Richmond, Maſter General of the Ordnance, for FORTIFYING the DOCK-YARDS of the kingdom; the propriety of which it was then agreed to refer to a Board of Land and Sea Officers, whoſe report Mr. Pitt ſtated to be in the higheſt degree favorable to the plan of fortification ſubmitted to their deciſion; but the report itſelf he declined as a matter of too ſerious and delicate a nature to lay before the Houſe.

The diſcontent and ſurpriſe manifeſted when the queſtion was laſt year under diſcuſſion, now roſe into great warmth of indignation and reſentment. "If the report or the eſſentials it contained were not to be in ſome mode ſubject to the inſpection of the Houſe, they were, it was affirmed, in exactly the ſame ſituation in which they had ſtood before the Board was appointed. They muſt decide, not upon their own judgments, but in deference to the authority of others. But the Houſe of Commons were not juſtified in voting away the money of their conſtituents upon the grounds of paſſive complaiſance and courtly ſubmiſſion. The expence attending this novel ſyſtem would be enormous, and it was their duty before they adopted it to be fully convinced of its neceſſity."

General Burgoyne, who was one of the Board, controverted the aſſertion of Mr. Pitt as to the entire

entire approbation expreſſed by them of the ſyſtem in queſtion. "It was well known, he ſaid, that caſes hypothetically put admitted only of a direct anſwer given under the admiſſion of the hypotheſis. It remained to be aſcertained, whether the caſe thus hypothetically put was ſufficiently within the limits of probability to deſerve attention. Several of the caſes on which the Board were called upon to decide were mere *poſtulata*, and hypothetically as extravagant as if it were aſked, Suppoſe by ſome convulſion of nature the Straits of Dover ſhould vaniſh out of exiſtence, and the coaſts of England and France were to unite, would it not be expedient to fortify the iſthmus between the two countries?"

Mr. Pitt, waving the farther diſcuſſion of the queſtion for the preſent, declared his determination to bring the buſineſs in the moſt ſpecific and ſolemn manner before the Houſe. He accordingly after a ſhort delay moved a reſolution, "That it appeared to the Houſe, that to provide effectually for ſecuring the dock-yards of Portſmouth and Plymouth by a permanent ſyſtem of fortification was an eſſential object for the ſafety of the State, &c. &c." A violent debate aroſe, in the courſe of which no Member diſtinguiſhed himſelf ſo eminently as Mr. Sheridan, a gentleman who had been for ſome time gradually riſing to a very elevated height of parliamentary reputation; and previous

to his introduction into the House of Commons the public had long known and admired the brilliant talents of this second Congreve in dramatic literature. Mr. Sheridan stated forcibly the danger to which the Constitution would be exposed in consequence of this vast addition to the military power of the Crown. "These strong military holds, maintained by numerous and disciplined garrisons, would afford tenfold the means of curbing and subduing the country as would arise from doubling the present army establishment. Could any one, he exclaimed, possibly imagine that the system now recommended was to end with Portsmouth and Plymouth, and that the reasonings of the Minister would not apply to other parts of the kingdom? No—we were to figure to ourselves the same Board of Officers, acting under the same instructions, and deliberating with the same DATA, going a circuit round the coasts of the kingdom. He wished to see the estimate for the stationary defence of such places as Chatham, Sheerness, &c. in addition to the two-and-twenty thousand men demanded for Portsmouth and Plymouth. Mr. Sheridan professed, nevertheless, his readiness to abide by the decision of the Board of Officers, if it could be fairly shewn that, upon a full and unfettered investigation of the subject, they had reported it as their clear and unqualified opinion, that the plan proposed by the Duke of Richmond

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was ſuch as it became the wiſdom of Parliament to adopt. But if the profeſſional abilities of the Duke of Richmond were ill-employed in the fabrication of ſo wild a project, it muſt be acknowledged they conſpicuouſly appeared in the planning and conſtructing the report in queſtion. There were certain detached *data*, like advanced works, to keep the enemy at a diſtance from the main object in debate. Strong proviſions covered the flanks of his aſſertions. His very queries were in caſemates. No impreſſion, therefore, was to be made on this fortreſs of ſophiſtry by deſultory obſervations; and it was neceſſary to aſſail it by regular approaches. Much ingenuity likewiſe had been ſhewn in extracting ſuch parts of the report as were deemed moſt favorable to the propoſed ſyſtem. The minutes which contained the opinion of the naval officers in condemnation of the plan were wholly omitted, becauſe they were mixed with matter of ſuch dangerous import that no chemical proceſs known in the Ordnance elaboratory could poſſibly ſeparate them; while on the contrary every approving opinion, like a light oily fluid, floated at the top, and was capable of being preſented to the Houſe pure and untinged by a ſingle particle of the argument and information upon which it was founded."

The Miniſter upon this occaſion found himſelf very generally deſerted by the Country Gentlemen

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or Independent Intereſt in the Houſe; and the diviſion was rendered memorable by an exact equality of numbers, both the ayes and the noes amounting to 169. The Speaker, being of courſe compelled to give his caſting vote, acquired much credit and applauſe by adding his negative to thoſe who had voted for the rejection of this chimerical, abſurd, and extravagant ſyſtem.

It is very remarkable that the Miniſter, notwithſtanding this defeat, had the temerity, after an interval of a few weeks, to bring forward the queſtion once more in a new form, by moving, "That an eſtimate of the expence of ſuch part of the plan of fortification recommended in the late report, as might appear moſt neceſſary to be carried into immediate execution, be referred to a Committee of Supply,"—the probable expence of which was eſtimated at *only* 400,000l.! This was received with extreme diſapprobation; it was ſaid to be impoſſible for Parliament to ſubmit to ſo open an attack upon their declared ſentiments, and they were called upon to reſiſt it in the moſt peremptory manner. Mr. Pitt, perceiving the ſenſe of the Houſe ſo manifeſtly adverſe to this attempt, thought proper to withdraw his motion; on which Mr. Fox expreſſed his earneſt hope "that the Miniſter would in future pay more reſpect to the opinion of the Legiſlature, and not attempt to force an obnoxious meaſure upon the country." The

pertinacity

pertinacity of Mr. Pitt in this buſineſs occaſioned much ſpeculation; and thoſe who recollected the tenor of his conduct reſpecting the Weſtminſter return, were not backward to throw diſgraceful imputations upon his integrity. It was thought by many to be impoſſible that a man of Mr. Pitt's diſcernment could be the ſincere and cordial advocate of ſo prepoſterous a ſcheme; and it was ſtrongly ſuſpected that the Duke of Richmond, in the proſecution of this favorite project, relied upon far other and higher ſupport than that which could be derived from the obſcure and ambiguous deciſion of a Board of General Officers*.

* The fortification projects of the Duke of Richmond became, in conſequence of this parliamentary inveſtigation of their merits, the theme of the public deriſion and ridicule; and, according to the obſervation of that unerring judge of mankind, the Duc de la Rochefoucault, "ridicule is like a gangrene, which, when once it faſtens upon one part of a character, is eaſily extended to the reſt." In a humorous political publication of the times, ſtyled The Rolliad, the Duke of Richmond is thus ſeverely and ſarcaſtically apoſtrophized:

With gorges, ſcaffolds, breaches, ditches, mines;
With culverins whole and demi, and gabines;
With trench, with counterſcarp, with eſplanade;
With curtins, mote, and rhombo, and chamade;
With polygon, epaulement, hedge and bank;
With angle faliant, and with angle flank;
Oh thou ſhalt prove, ſhould all thy ſchemes prevail,
An Uncle Toby on a larger ſcale.

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The grand buſineſs of the ſeſſion, as alluded to in the ſpeech, was not brought forward till the month of March, when Mr. Pitt moved for the appointment of a Select Committee, by ballot, to report to the Houſe the ſtate of the public revenue and expenditure. The reſult of their enquiry was in a very high degree pleaſing and ſatisfactory. The amount of the revenue for the current year was eſtimated by the Committee at 15,397,000l.—the permanent expenditure, including the Civil Liſt, and the intereſts payable on the different funds, amounted to 10,554,000l.—the peace eſtabliſhment, allowing eighteen thouſand men for the navy, and the uſual complement of ſeventy regiments for the army, excluſive of life-guards and cavalry, was eſtimated at 3,924,000l.—in all, 14,478,000l.; of conſequence there remained a ſurplus of more than 900,000l.

Mr. Pitt obſerved upon this report, "that though this was ſtated to be the annual expenditure, a conſiderable interval muſt elapſe before this reduction could take place; this term he fixed at four years. The exceedings of the army, navy, and ordnance, together with the ſums neceſſary for the indemnification of the American Loyaliſts, he calculated would not during this period fall ſhort of three millions. The war from which we were juſt delivered had been moſt expenſive and ruinous; theſe unavoidable exceedings were

amongſt the bitter fruits of it; but if during the firſt years of peace extraordinary expences were incurred, they afforded alſo extraordinary ſavings. There were ſums appropriated during the war to different ſervices, which had not been expended; four hundred and fifty thouſand pounds had already been paid into the Exchequer upon this account. There were moreover immenſe ſums in the hands of former Paymaſters, which it was expected would ſoon be brought to account; theſe he conjecturally ſtated at the ſum of one million. There was a balance of 600,000l. due to Government from the Eaſt India Company. When to theſe were added the improvements that might yet be made by judicious regulations in the different branches of the revenue, he was not, Mr. Pitt ſaid, he hoped, too ſanguine in affirming that we poſſeſſed reſources equal to all our ordinary and extraordinary demands. The propoſition which he now ſubmitted to the Houſe was, the appropriation of the annual ſum of one million to be invariably applied to the liquidation of the public debt. The ſurplus of the revenue amounting to the ſum of 900,000l. only, Mr. Pitt moved for an additional duty on ſpirits, on certain kinds of timber imported, and on perfumery, which would together be more than ſufficient to make up the deficiency. This annual million Mr. Pitt wiſely propoſed to veſt in the hands of certain Commiſſioners, to be by them

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applied regularly to the purchaſe of ſtock; ſo that no ſum ſhould ever lie within the graſp large enough to tempt him to violate this ſacred depoſit. The intereſts annually diſcharged were, conformably to this plan, to be added to and incorporated with the original fund, ſo that it would operate with a determinate and accelerated velocity; being in this reſpect framed upon the model of the Sinking Fund formerly projected by Sir Robert Walpole. This fund was alſo to be aſſiſted by the annuities granted for different terms, which would from time to time fall in within the limited period of twenty-eight years, at the expiration of which Mr. Pitt calculated that the fund would produce an income of four millions per annum. When a progreſs ſo conſiderable was made in the reduction of the debt, Parliament might with propriety pauſe, and adopt ſuch new meaſures for the relief of the nation, and the extinction of the moſt oppreſſive and burdenſome taxes, as to the legiſlative wiſdom ſhould ſeem meet. The Commiſſioners to be nominated under the act were the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Speaker of the Houſe of Commons, the Maſter of the Rolls, the Governor and Deputy Governor of the Bank of England, and the Accomptant General of the High Court of Chancery. Such were the perſons, Mr. Pitt ſaid, whom he ſhould propoſe to be appointed to this truſt. This plan had long been the wiſh and the hope of all good men, and he felt

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inexpreſſible pleaſure in being able to flatter himſelf that his name might be inſcribed on that firm column, which was now about to be raiſed to national faith and national proſperity."

It was in the progreſs of the bill ſuggeſted by Mr. Fox, "that whenever a new loan ſhould hereafter be made, the Commiſſioners ſhould be empowered to accept the loan, or ſuch proportion of it, as ſhould be equal to the caſh then in their hands; the intereſt and *douceur* annexed to which ſhould be applied to the purpoſes of the Sinking Fund." This amendment, the only one of material conſequence offered, was received with candor and facility by Mr. Pitt, who declared it to be "an auſpicious omen of the ultimate ſucceſs of the plan, that its propriety and neceſſity had been ſo obvious as to overcome the ſpirit and prejudice of party, and create an unanimity of ſentiment in perſons who more, he was ſure, from accident than inclination were ſo frequently of different opinions."

The bill finally paſſed with great and deſerved approbation; all intelligent perſons throughout the kingdom perfectly concurring in the ſentiments expreſſed in the recent report of the Commiſſioners of Public Accounts upon this ſubject. "This debt," ſay theſe impartial and faithful reporters, "is ſwelled to a magnitude that requires the united efforts of the ableſt heads and the

pureſt hearts to ſuggeſt the proper and effectual means of reduction. A PLAN muſt be formed for the reduction of this debt, and that without delay: NOW is the favorable moment of peace. The evil does not admit of procraſtination, palliatives, or expedients. It preſſes on, and muſt be met with force and firmneſs: what *can* be done, the ſupport of public credit, the preſervation of national honor, and the juſtice due to the public creditor, demand *ſhould* be done. It MUST be DONE, or SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES will enſue."

Notwithſtanding the acknowledged neceſſity of œconomy in every department of Government, it is grievous to relate, that even before the Sinking Fund Bill paſſed into a law, a meſſage from the KING to the Houſe of Commons was delivered by the Miniſter, ſtating, "that it gave him great concern to inform them, that it had not been found POSSIBLE to confine the expences of the Civil Liſt within the annual ſum of eight hundred and fifty thouſand pounds, now applicable to that purpoſe. A farther debt had been NECESSARILY incurred, and the King relied on the ZEAL and AFFECTION of his PARLIAMENT to make proviſion for its diſcharge."

In ſupport of the motion grounded on this meſſage, Mr. Pitt ſtated, "that under Mr. Burke's Reform Bill an annual reduction of fifty thouſand pounds from the Civil Liſt had been ſet apart by

by Parliament for the liquidation by inſtalments of the ſum of three hundred thouſand pounds, then iſſued in Exchequer bills for the ſupply of former deficiencies. Of this debt one hundred and eighty thouſand pounds yet remained unpaid, and a freſh debt of thirty thouſand pounds had accrued: and he reſted the neceſſity of a grant equal to theſe united ſums upon this *perplexing dilemma:* Either Parliament had, at the period referred to, directed that, when the propoſed liquidation ſhould be effected, the Civil Liſt ſhould be allowed fifty thouſand pounds per ann. more than was neceſſary, or it was then put upon a footing of fifty thouſand pounds per ann. leſs than was neceſſary. Experience had proved the latter to be the caſe; and therefore it was reaſonable to expect that the ſum of two hundred and ten thouſand pounds, now wanting to clear off the old and new incumbrances, would be voted without heſitation."

In reply to Mr. Pitt's courtly logic, it was obvious to obſerve, that the Parliament which fixed the expenditure of the Civil Liſt at eight hundred and fifty thouſand pounds, until the debt previouſly contracted ſhould be liquidated, thought it at leaſt POSSIBLE that the DIGNITY of the CROWN might be ſufficiently ſuſtained without paſſing the preſcribed limits. It might even perhaps occur to ſome of the members, however indecorous the

mention of it in a parliamentary debate, that the Executive Government of the Republic of America was ſupported without any apparent forfeiture of DIGNITY, at leſs than one FORTIETH part of the expence.

This demand was the more extraordinary, as the King in his ſpeech from the throne at the opening of the ſeſſion, December 1782, had ſaid, "I have carried into ſtrict execution the ſeveral reductions in my Civil Liſt expences, directed by an act of laſt ſeſſion; I have introduced a farther reform in other departments, and ſuppreſſed ſeveral ſinecure places in them. I have by this means ſo regulated my eſtabliſhments, that MY EXPENCES SHALL NOT IN FUTURE EXCEED MY INCOME."

No attempt being made to repeal that clauſe in Mr. Burke's Reform Bill, which regulated the expenditure of the Civil Liſt, it was urged to be very extraordinary, while that bill remained in full force, to come down in the face of an Act of Parliament, and call upon the Houſe to vote money for the debts of the Crown. It is almoſt ſuperfluous to ſay, that all the arguments offered on this head proved a mere waſte of words, and that the money was ultimately voted.

Many petitions were preſented during the ſeſſion, for the repeal of the odious tax upon retail ſhops; and a motion was formally made by Sir

Watkin Lewes, member for the City of London, for that purpoſe, without effect, though it was ſomewhat mitigated by a reduction of the rates. In this buſineſs Mr. Pitt ſhewed a degree of perſeverance bordering upon obſtinacy, which it had been ſurely better to have reſerved for a more important occaſion.

Mr. Fox acutely remarked on the ſubject of the propoſed alterations, "that the greater part of Mr. Pitt's arguments had been intended to prove that the tax was not perſonal; and that it muſt find its level, and fall upon the conſumer. If this were true, what was there to recommend his modifications? He had ſtated, that he would take off or diminiſh the portion of the tax paid by the poorer claſs of ſhopkeepers, which would conſiderably exonerate that deſcription of perſons. Of what would it exonerate them? Of the burden borne by the conſumer? Glaring indeed was the inconſiſtency of his actions, when compared with his arguments."

An attempt was alſo made by Mr. Pulteney, ſupported by many reſpectable Members of the Houſe, to explain and amend the act of the laſt ſeſſion, relative to hawkers and pedlars; and particularly to repeal a moſt deteſtably oppreſſive clauſe, by which Juſtices of the Peace were empowered to impriſon any perſon of this profeſſion

at their diſcretion. This was rejected, at the ſecond reading, by a majority of fifty voices.

About this period Mr. Pitt brought in a bill for transferring part of the duties on foreign wines from the cuſtoms to the exciſe. The revenue on this article, the conſumption of which had certainly not diminiſhed, Mr. Pitt ſtated to be inferior by the ſum of two hundred and eighty thouſand pounds to what it had been in the middle of the century. The terrible alarm excited by Sir Robert Walpole's memorable attempt to extend the laws of exciſe fifty years before, had now completely ſubſided, and the bill paſſed with general approbation.

In the Houſe of Peers Lord Loughborough, who was now again metamorphoſed into a Whig and a Patriot, oppoſed the bill, as in the higheſt degree arbitrary and unconſtitutional. He was anſwered by Lord Camden, whoſe zeal for the Conſtitution had been ſubject to no ſuch remarkable variations. Lord Camden admitted "that the exciſe laws, taken collectively, might in a certain ſenſe be conſidered as a departure from the Conſtitution; but the preſent ſtate of the country rendered them neceſſary. The preſent bill, in particular, was calculated to counteract the notorious impoſitions practiſed by the wine-merchants to delude the public, to cheat the revenue, and injure

jure the health of the conſumer. In theſe iniquities it was that a juſtification of this uſeful and ſalutary meaſure was to be found." The bill paſſed without a diviſion.

Next to the eſtabliſhment of the new ſinking fund, the affairs of India occupied, during this ſeſſion, the chief attention of Parliament. A bill was brought in by Mr. Dundas, which with ſome oppoſition paſſed into a law, to explain and amend the act of 1784. This bill, among other regulations of inferior importance, beſtowed upon the Governor General of India the high prerogative of deciding in oppoſition to the ſenſe of the majority of the Council. The offices of Commander in Chief and Governor General were in future united in the ſame perſon; and Earl Cornwallis, who had borne ſo conſpicuous a part in the American war, and whoſe character ſtood deſervedly high in the public eſtimation, was nominated to fill this important commiſſion.

Soon after this Mr. Pitt, ſtating certain exigencies ariſing from the peculiar ſituation of the Eaſt India Company, moved that they be empowered to raiſe the ſum of two millions for the neceſſary increaſe of their capital. This was in itſelf a very problematic proof of the vaunted proſperity of the Company; but Mr. Pitt aſſerted the neceſſity to be temporary, and that it aroſe chiefly from the beneficial operation of the Commutation Act,

in conſequence of which the Company's ſales of tea had increaſed from ſix to fourteen millions of pounds, excluſive of other articles; and in proportion to an increaſe of trade, an increaſe of capital became indiſpenſably requiſite. And on this ground the bill paſſed with little difficulty. Theſe meaſures were regarded with cold indifference; but the feelings of the nation were wrought up to an high pitch of ſolicitude and curioſity by the ſubſequent proceedings of Parliament relative to India.

Mr. HASTINGS, late Governor of Bengal, arrived in England in the month of June 1785; and the ſeaſon being then far advanced, Mr. Burke gave notice of his intention to move early in the next ſeſſion for a parliamentary inveſtigation into his conduct.

On the very firſt day of the meeting of Parliament after the receſs, Major Scott, who had upon all occaſions diſtinguiſhed himſelf as the friend and advocate of Mr. Haſtings, reminded Mr. Burke of the pledge he had made, and challenged him in preſſing and peremptory terms to come to an immediate deciſion. Mr. Burke calmly replied, "that he ſhould imitate the conduct of the Duke of Parma, who came from the Low Countries to relieve the city of Paris, then beſieged by King Henry IV. The King, impatient and full of ardor, urged the Duke to inſtant battle; but that

that experienced and celebrated commander replied, that he had not travelled ſo far to learn from his enemy the time when it was moſt proper to engage."

On the 17th of February 1786, however, Mr. Burke, in the ſpirit of ancient chivalry, threw down the gauntlet, and deſiring that the reſolutions of May 28, 1782, might be read (reſolutions moved by Mr. Dundas, as Chairman of the Select Committee, declaratory of the culpability of Mr. Haſtings, and the conſequent neceſſity of his recall), declared his "deep regret, that the ſolemn and important buſineſs of that day had not been brought forward in the plenitude of weight and efficiency, by the original mover of the reſolutions now recited. Moſt feelingly did he lament, as the unwelcome conſequence of a devolution cauſed partly by the natural demiſe of ſome, the political deceaſe of others, and in particular caſes a death to virtue and to principle, that he ſhould now remain alone engaged in the attempt to preſerve unſullied the honor and the conſiſtency of that Houſe, which had fixed upon Mr. Haſtings as an object of their particular and formal accuſation. Acting under their ſanction, he aſſerted a claim to their protection. There were various modes of proceeding which might be adopted in this buſineſs—the firſt of theſe was a direction to the Attorney General

to profecute. But not to infift upon the apparent difinclination of the prefent Attorney General (Mr. Arden) to exert his powers in this great and momentous caufe, he did not conceive that a trial by jury was well calculated for the purpofe of obtaining juftice againft fo elevated an offender. In the Court of King's Bench the dignity of fuch a trial would ill affort with caufes of *meum* and *tuum*, actions of battery and affault, of trefpafs and trover, together with the innumerable tribe of fubordinate mifdemeanors. The fecond mode of profecution was that by bill of pains and penalties. To this he had infuperable objections, as radically unjuft, and as tarnifhing in no flight degree the character of that Houfe, the Members of which would thus prepofterouſly appear in the two-fold capacity of accufers and judges. The only alternative which remained, was the ancient and conftitutional mode of proceeding by IMPEACHMENT: as a neceffary preparatory to which, he concluded with moving for the papers neceffary to fubftantiate the charge which he had now in immediate contemplation to bring forward againft the late Governor General Haftings."

Mr. Dundas with his ufual verfatility affirmed, "that though he had thought it expedient in the year 1782 to recall Mr. Haftings from India, he now rejoiced that the refolutions moved by him had not taken effect. Since that period Mr. Haftings

Haſtings had rendered moſt eſſential ſervices to the Company, and he ſhould have extremely regretted to have been the means of depriving the Company of a ſervant ſo diſtinguiſhed by his zeal and capacity. He had certainly moved a vote of cenſure on Mr. Haſtings; but Mr. Haſtings had ſince received the thanks of the Court of Directors, in which, had he been a director, he would moſt willingly have concurred, from a thorough conviction that the thanks were merited."

Some difficulties having been ſuggeſted by Mr. Pitt, reſpecting the production of the papers called for, Mr. Burke declared in lofty terms this demur to be "an invaſion of the prerogative of a public accuſer. He had an unqueſtionable claim to all ſuch documents, proofs and papers, as he ſaw or eſteemed to be neceſſary to ſupport the charge which he undertook to advance. The downfall of the greateſt empire in the world had originated in the mal-adminiſtration of its provinces. When Rome felt within herſelf the ſeeds of decline, and the inroads of corruption, a man of the firſt rank and of the higheſt connections in the ſtate was brought to puniſhment. VERRES, the Governor of Sicily, was united in affinity with all that was moſt ſplendid and moſt opulent in the ſeat of empire, with the Hortenſii and the Metelli. But when CICERO undertook his accuſation, the Government itſelf adopted his proſecution.

ſecution. No leſs than one hundred and fifty days were allowed for the collection of materials, and the juſtice of the Roman Senate opened to the accuſer all the cabinets whence documents were to be obtained." In the reſult, the papers, with ſome few exceptions, were granted.

On the 4th of April, 1786, Mr. Burke ſolemnly roſe to charge Warren Haſtings, Eſq. late Governor General of Bengal, with high crimes and miſdemeanors in the execution of his office, exhibiting at the ſame time nine diſtinct articles of accuſation, which in a few weeks were increaſed to the number of twenty-two.

On the 1ſt of May Mr. Haſtings, at his own expreſs deſire, and by the indulgence of the Houſe, was heard at the bar of the Houſe, in this early period of the buſineſs, in his own defence: and at the farther requeſt of the accuſed, the minutes of his defence were ordered to lie on the table. But the general opinion, faintly controverted even by the friends of Mr. Haſtings, was, that the DEFENCE, thus precipitately and prematurely delivered, was of no ſervice to his cauſe, and contributed in a very ſlight and inadequate degree to the vindication of his character. Though his aſſertions were bold, his arguments were weak, and the language of this defence was beyond all example boaſtful and arrogant. He had even the weakneſs and preſumption to call in queſtion the

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AUTHORITY of the Houſe to inſtitute a judicial inquiry into his conduct.

The Houſe, unmoved by what they had heard, proceeded in the examination of evidence; and the firſt article of impeachment reſpecting the Rohilla war was brought formally before the Houſe on the 1ſt of June. After a very long debate, the queſtion was decided in favor of Mr. Haſtings, ayes for the impeachment being 67, noes 119.

Mr. Pitt on this occaſion gave a ſilent vote againſt the motion; but the ground on which he voted was tolerably well aſcertained by a declaration he had previouſly made, when the ſubject of the Rohilla war was in a more general way diſcuſſed, "that he conſidered that tranſaction in a horribly alarming point of view; and as being ſo repugnant to every ſentiment of human nature, that nothing could juſtify it but the ſtrongeſt motives of political expediency, and the invincible principles of retributive juſtice—*adding*, nevertheleſs, that it would be highly inconſiſtent and abſurd to conſider Mr. Haſtings now in the light of a culprit, for any meaſures taken by him previouſly to the period in which he had been nominated by Act of Parliament Governor General of India, which was the higheſt certificate of legiſlative approbation." But ſurely, in the contemplation of common juſtice and common

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ſenſe, this re-appointment could not be regarded as equivalent to an acquittal, unleſs the Houſe were at that period in poſſeſſion of the evidence on which the merits or demerits of the tranſaction reſted, which it was notorious they were not.

On the 13th of June, the ſecond charge, relative to the Rajah of Benares, being brought forward, it was reſolved by the Houſe, on a diviſion of 119 to 79 voices, "that this CHARGE contained MATTER of IMPEACHMENT againſt the late GOVERNOR GENERAL of BENGAL." On this occaſion Mr. Pitt ſpoke in ſupport of the motion; but admitting the legality of the diſcretionary power aſſumed by Mr. Haſtings, he confined the criminality of the charge to the enormity of the fine levied upon the Rajah, and its concomitant circumſtances of oppreſſion and cruelty.

On the 11th of July, 1786, an end was put to theſe proceedings for the preſent by a prorogation of the Parliament, which was diſmiſſed with aſſurances of "the particular ſatisfaction with which the King had obſerved their diligent attention to the public buſineſs, and the meaſures they had adopted for improving the reſources of the country."

Soon after the riſing of Parliament, a ſingular incident occurred which engroſſed for a moment

the attention of the public. As the King was alighting from his poſt-chariot at the garden entrance of St. James's Palace, Auguſt the 2d, a woman decently dreſſed preſented a paper to his Majeſty; and while he was in the act of receiving it, ſhe ſtruck with a concealed knife at his breaſt. The King happily avoided the blow by drawing back; and as ſhe was preparing to make a ſecond thruſt, one of the yeomen caught her arm, and the weapon was wrenched out of her hand.

On examination before the Privy Council, it immediately appeared that the woman was inſane. Being aſked where ſhe had lately reſided, ſhe anſwered frantically, "that ſhe had been all abroad ſince that matter of the Crown broke out." Being further queſtioned what matter? ſhe ſaid, "that the Crown was hers; and that if ſhe had not her right, England would be deluged in blood for a thouſand generations." On being interrogated as to the nature of her right, ſhe refuſed to anſwer, ſaying in the genuine ſtyle of royalty, "that her rights were a MYSTERY."

It appeared that this poor maniac, whoſe name was Margaret Nicholſon, had preſented a petition ten days before, full of wild and incoherent nonſenſe. Like moſt other petitions, it had probably never been read, or the perſon of the petitioner would have been ſecured. The idea of a judicial proceſs was of courſe abandoned, and ſhe was con-

conſigned to a fit apartment provided for her in Bethlehem Hoſpital. In few days the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, Sheriffs and Common Council of the City of London went in proceſſion to St. James's to preſent an Addreſs to his Majeſty on his happy eſcape from *aſſaſſination.* This example was followed by nearly all the corporate bodies throughout the kingdom; and the popularity of the King was ſenſibly increaſed by this trivial and almoſt ludicrous incident. The number and quality of *Knighthoods* conferred on occaſion of theſe addreſſes, were ſuch as completed the ridicule, ſo ſucceſsfully levelled ſince the days of Cervantes, againſt that once honorable and envied diſtinction*.

In the month of September 1786, the King was pleaſed to appoint a new Committee of Council, for the conſideration of all matters relating to trade and foreign plantations. Of this Board the famous Charles Jenkinſon, now for his long and faithful ſervices created Lord Hawkeſbury, and conſtituted Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaſter, was declared Preſident. Under the auſpices of

* According to an anecdote ſomewhere related of Charles II. the witty and profligate, that monarch, obſerving a perſon on whom he was about to confer the *honor* of Knighthood to hang down his head and bluſh, as if conſcious of the deficiency of his pretenſions, exclaimed with his uſual good humor and pleaſantry, "Don't be aſhamed—'Tis I who have moſt reaſon."

this

this new Commiſſion a TREATY of COMMERCE was ſigned between the two Courts of England and France (September 26, 1786) on the liberal principles of equality and reciprocity. Its general principle was to admit the mutual importation and exportation of the commodities of each country at a very low *ad valorem* duty. The negotiator of this treaty was Mr. Eden, who under the Coalition Adminiſtration had filled the lucrative office of Vice-Treaſurer of Ireland.

This was the firſt memorable defection from that ill-ſtarred and heterogeneous alliance: and it was the more remarkable, as Mr. Eden had himſelf been generally conſidered as the original projector of the Coalition, or at leaſt as the man who might conteſt that honor with Mr. Burke. He ſoon attained to the dignity of the peerage under the title of Baron Auckland.

About the ſame time a Convention was ſigned with Spain of ſome importance, as it finally terminated the long ſubſiſting diſputes reſpecting the ſettlements of the Engliſh Nation on the Moſquito ſhore, and the coaſt of Honduras. By the preſent treaty the Moſquito ſettlements were formally and explicitly relinquiſhed, as they had already virtually been by the 6th article of the general treaty of 1783. In return the boundaries of the Engliſh ſettlements on the Coaſt and Bay

of

of Honduras were somewhat extended, but in such manner, and on such conditions, as to leave the King of Spain in full possession of his territorial rights and exclusive dominion.

In a political view this Convention answered a valuable purpose, as it removed a probable source of national disagreement. But the claims of humanity and justice were not sufficiently attended to. For the Mosquito settlers, who had from time immemorial occupied their lands and habitations under the protection of the English Government, and who amounted to many hundred families in number, were peremptorily commanded to evacuate the country of the Mosquitoes, without exception, in the space of eighteen months, nothing farther being stipulated in their favor, than that his Catholic Majesty "shall order his Governors to grant to the said English so dispersed, all possible facilities for their removal to the settlements agreed upon by the present Convention."

The greatest confusion, consternation, and distress among this unhappy people, was the inevitable result of this barbarous edict of expulsion, which, with the cold-blooded politicians of Europe, at the distance of 3000 miles, passed only for a regulation of commerce. An affecting representation of their distresses, and an humble petition for some sort of indemnification from the Govern-

Government which had thus carelesly abandoned them to their fate, was subsequently presented to the Board of Treasury; but it does not appear to have excited any attention. By "the insolence of office," the sighs of the oppressed are regarded as a species of insult.

On the re-assembling of Parliament, January 23, 1787, the first object of debate which presented itself, was the Commercial Treaty with France. On the 12th of February the House resolved itself into a Committee on this subject, when Mr. Pitt entered into a most able and eloquent vindication of the measure, though, in the opinion of impartial persons, the treaty sufficiently spoke its own merits. Mr. Pitt declared in energetic terms his abhorrence of the maxim, that any nation was destined to be the natural and unalterable foe of another. It had no foundation in the experience of nations, or in the history of men. It was a libel on the constitution of political societies, and supposed the existence of infernal malignity in our original frame. "France (Mr. Pitt said) in most of our wars had been the aggressor; but her assurances and frankness in the present negotiation were such as to entitle her to a return of confidence. It was indeed ridiculous to imagine that the French would consent to yield advantages without the idea of compensation. The treaty would doubtless be a benefit

to them; but he did not hesitate to say it would be a much greater benefit to us. She gained for her wines and other productions a great and opulent market. We did the same for our manufactures to a far greater degree. She procured a market of eight millions of people, we a market of twenty-four millions. Both nations were disposed and prepared for such a connection. France, by the peculiar dispensation of Providence, was gifted, perhaps more than any other country upon earth, with what made life desirable, in point of soil, climate, and natural productions, in the most fertile vineyards, and the richest harvests. Britain, on the other hand, possessing these advantages in an inferior degree, had, from the happy freedom of its constitution, and the equal security of its laws, risen to a state of commercial grandeur, and acquired the ability of supplying France with the requisite conveniences of life, in exchange for her natural luxuries."

Very plausible objections were nevertheless suggested by the Leaders of Opposition against this treaty, and predictions hazarded of the injury which would be sustained by Great Britain in consequence of this measure, which were far from being eventually verified; and which it is therefore superfluous to particularize. Such, nevertheless, was the impression made upon the House by the arguments advanced, that no less than 162 members

members divided againſt the Miniſter on a motion for an Addreſs to his Majeſty, declaratory of the approbation of the Houſe; which was ultimately carried by a majority of 76 voices.

The oppoſition in the Houſe was not however ſupported, as in the caſe of the Iriſh Propoſitions, by any commercial clamors beyond its walls. And Mr. Pitt accurately and ſatisfactorily accounted for this difference, by obſerving "that in the former inſtance the clamors of the manufacturers, though he thought them founded in error, had been general and violent, becauſe they perceived no great and poſitive advantage in the intercourſe to balance the apprehended evil of a rivalry and competition, England being already in poſſeſſion of the Iriſh market. But *now* that they ſaw ſo manifeſt and valuable a benefit to be reaped, they were willing to hazard the poſſibility of the injury."

The topic on which the Oppoſition inſiſted with the moſt advantage, and indeed the only real difficulty reſpecting the execution of this treaty, aroſe from its inconſiſtency on the *firſt bluſh* with the famous Methuen Treaty, concluded with Portugal early in the preſent century, in conformity to which the duties on Portugal wines were to bear in future the proportion of only two-thirds of thoſe imported from France and other countries. But this point being candidly conceded by

France in the progreſs of the buſineſs, the meaſure received, as it well deſerved, the neceſſary concurrence and ſanction of Parliament, and the whole tranſaction terminated greatly to the honor of the Miniſter, and the advantage of the Nation; the ſole cauſe of regret, in fact, being the limitation of the treaty to the ſhort period of twelve years.

Another very uſeful commercial meaſure, though of very inferior importance, a meaſure founded on the reports of the Commiſſioners of Public Accounts, was early in the preſent ſeſſion brought forward by Mr. Pitt for the conſolidation of the Cuſtoms, by the total abolition of all the exiſting confuſed and complex duties, and ſubſtituting in their ſtead a ſingle duty on each article, amounting as nearly as poſſible to the aggregate of the various ſubſidies now paid; taking univerſally, inſtead of a fraction, the neareſt integral number above it. By this means the revenue would be conſiderably benefited, and the merchant relieved from a ſerious inconvenience. It is a curious circumſtance, that the ſeries of reſolutions preſented to the Houſe, but of which they choſe to wave the formality of reading, amounted to more than three thouſand in number.

A regulation of finance, much leſs generally approved, was alſo propoſed by Mr. Pitt, relative to the tax on poſt-horſes, which he affirmed to have

have been moſt groſsly and ſcandalouſly evaded. By way of remedy, he recommended that it ſhould be farmed by auction to the higheſt bidder, on the uſual plan of the turnpike duty. This was repreſented as repugnant to the genius of the Engliſh Conſtitution. It might prove, as the farming of the revenue had notoriouſly done in France, the ſource of infinite abuſe and oppreſſion. It eſtabliſhed a dangerous and alarming precedent, and required to be reſolutely reſiſted in the outſet. Upon the queſtion for going into a Committee on this bill, the numbers were only 147 ayes to 100 noes. It muſt however be acknowledged, that this obnoxious regulation has not been found productive of any practical inconvenience.

In the courſe of the ſeſſion Mr. Fox moved for the repeal of the odious Shop Tax, which, in conſequence of the pertinacious adherence of Mr. Pitt to a meaſure in itſelf very trivial and unintereſting, had become a matter of permanent and ſerious concern. It appeared from the ſtatement of Mr. Fox, that the City of London and its environs paid forty-three ſhares in fifty-nine of this duty, the whole produce being eſtimated at only fifty-nine thouſand pounds. This was affirmed with reaſon to be an unjuſt and monſtrous diſproportion. But in truth the Commutation Tax fell as heavily in proportion upon the country, as the

Shop Tax upon the metropolis; however comparatively deſtitute of the means of enforcing their complaints, or procuring redreſs. On the diviſion the numbers were, ayes 147, noes 183; the Miniſterial majority in a full Houſe being, on this ſecond attempt at repeal, reduced to 36 voices only.

On the 28th of March 1787, a motion of great importance was made by Mr. Beaufoy, a Member of the Houſe, diſtinguiſhed by his knowledge, talents, and general reſpectability of character, for amending, and in part repealing, the laws known by the appellation of the Corporation and Teſt Acts, ſo far as related to the Proteſtant Diſſenters, who weakly flattered themſelves, that their recent ſervices were not as yet wholly loſt to the recollection of the Court. In his introductory ſpeech, Mr. Beaufoy gave a clear and judicious hiſtorical narrative of the origin of theſe acts. "The Corporation Act declared that no perſon ſhould be elected into any municipal office, who ſhould not one year before his election have taken the ſacrament according to the uſage of the Church of England. The Teſt Act required of every perſon accepting a civil or military office under the Crown, to take the ſacrament in like manner within a limited time; in default of which he was liable to a fine of 500l. and incurred other penalties in the higheſt degree ſevere and rigorous. The firſt of theſe acts was paſſed in the year 1661; and

and the deſpotic and arbitrary ſpirit in which it was framed, ſufficiently appeared from a ſingle clauſe in the act, empowering the King for a limited time to remove at his pleaſure all municipal officers by Commiſſioners of his appointment. This act was levelled indiſcriminately againſt Proteſtant and Catholic Diſſenters; but in the year 1673, the æra of the Teſt Act, the ſtate of things was materially changed. The jealouſy of Parliament in regard to the Proteſtant Diſſenters had now ſubſided, and the alarm of all the different denominations of Proteſtants was equally excited by the dangers to which Proteſtantiſm itſelf was expoſed by the flagrant attempts of the Court to effect the reſtoration of the Popiſh religion. The King himſelf was believed, on good ground, to be nothing better than a concealed Papiſt. The Duke of York, his brother, and immediate ſucceſſor to the Crown, was not only an avowed convert to that religion, but a flaming and furious zealot. Lord Clifford, the firſt miniſter, and other perſons in high authority, were alſo bigoted Papiſts; and a Declaration of Indulgence had been publiſhed by the King, in order to make way for the introduction of Popery. In theſe circumſtances, the Teſt Act was a meaſure of national policy and ſafety. It bore the title of 'An Act for preventing the Danger which may happen from Popiſh Recuſants'—and the Diſſenters, far from concurring in the

oppoſition made by the Court to this bill, publicly declared, through the medium of Mr. Alderman Love, one of the Members for the City of London, and himſelf a Diſſenter, 'that in a time of public danger they would in no wiſe impede the progreſs of a meaſure deemed eſſential to the ſafety of the kingdom;—and *though they were accidentally included in the operation of it*, they would wave their claim to an exemption, truſting to the good faith, juſtice, and humanity of Parliament, that a future proviſion ſhould be made for their relief.' This ſeaſonable declaration extremely facilitated the paſſing of the bill, and was received with juſt and general applauſe. A bill for their relief was accordingly at a ſubſequent period of the ſeſſion paſſed by the Commons, but defeated by the ſudden prorogation of Parliament. A ſecond bill was in a ſucceeding Parliament brought in, and paſſed both Houſes; but while it lay ready for the royal aſſent, the King degraded his dignity ſo far, as ſecretly to order the Clerk of the Crown to withdraw the bill; and the Parliament being ſoon afterwards diſſolved, it never paſſed into a law.

"But the relief which the unprincipled profligacy of Charles refuſed to grant, the magnanimity of William was impatient to beſtow. In one of his earlieſt ſpeeches from the throne, he expreſſed his 'earneſt hope, that ſuch alteration would be made in the laws as would leave

leave room for the admiſſion of all his Proteſtant ſubjects who were willing to ſerve him.' But at this period the High Church and Tory intereſt predominated in oppoſition to the wiſe and ſalutary policy of the Court. From the memorable proteſt of the Lords upon this ſubject in the year 1689, it appeared nevertheleſs that the ſentiments of ſeveral of the greateſt men in that extraordinary æra coincided with thoſe of their Sovereign. And upon another occaſion of a ſtill later date—a conference between the two Houſes upon the Bill of occaſional Conformity—the Peers (not a few individuals only of that Aſſembly, but the whole Houſe) expreſſed in language ſtill more emphatical their abhorrence of the injuſtice of the Teſt Act."

In diſcuſſing the general policy of this law, Mr. Beauſoy obſerved, " that to the higher truſt of legiſlative authority the Diſſenters were admitted without reſerve. From the Members of that Houſe, from the Members of the Houſe of Peers, no religious teſt was required. Hence he ſtrongly inferred the abſurdity of the impoſition in queſtion. He had heard indeed of an idle opinion that there was ſomething of a republican tendency, of an anti-monarchical bias, in the very doctrines of the Preſbyterian Church. From ſo vague an aſſertion he appealed to experience. Were the Scots ſuſpected of an indifference to Monarchy?

Monarchy? He had heard them taxed with a predilection for those maxims of policy which were the most favorable to power; but of levelling principles, of republican attachments, he had never heard them accused. The English Dissenters, since the Revolution, which had first given this country a Constitution, had uniformly acted on principles the most beneficial, and had constantly proved themselves the ardent supporters and the faithful adherents of that system of Monarchy which was established by law. Would then the repeal of the Test Act prove injurious to the Established Church? GOD FORBID! The suggested repeal was no attack upon the rights of others; it was merely the completion of that wise system of toleration adopted at the æra of the Revolution. The Church of England flourished long before the Test Act existed. In Scotland, no such law ever had a being. Had Scotland therefore no Established Church? In Ireland, the relief now solicited had been granted seven years ago. But was the Church of Ireland therefore destroyed? In Holland, in Russia, in Prussia, in HANOVER, no traces of such a test were to be found. In the dominions of the Emperor, all disqualifications of this nature had been recently abolished. In France, a similar relief was granted by the Edict of Nantz, from the revocation of which France had so severely suffered, and which was now, as it was supposed, about

about to be reſtored. In fact," Mr. Beaufoy juſtly added, " the repeal of the Teſt, ſo far from being pernicious to the Eſtabliſhed Church, would be ſalutary. The different claſſes of Diſſenters had no general intereſt, no bond of union, but that reproachful excluſion from public employments which was common to them all. If he were farther aſked, If juſtice be the principle on which you decide, ſhall not the Catholics enjoy the common privileges of citizenſhip? he would anſwer without heſitation, If the Catholics could give a ſufficient pledge of loyalty to their Sovereign, and attachment to the laws—queſtions not now before the Houſe—he ſhould think they ought to be admitted to the civil and military ſervice of the State." Such were the liberal and elevated ſentiments of this ſpeaker, who concluded this excellent addreſs with an enumeration of other conſiderations, more of a religious than political kind, in favor of the repeal, deduced from the groſs profanation to which the nature of the preſent Teſt ſubjected a ſacred and ſolemn Chriſtian rite. Mr. Beaufoy declared, " that he ſhould have thought it not unbecoming the ſanctity of the Biſhops to have ſolicited the removal of this ſcandal from the Church. But let the requiſition come from whatever quarter it might, ſure he was that a compliance with it would reflect honor on that Houſe: for whatever tended to the debaſement of religion, diminiſhed political

political authority, and weakened all the functions of civil and social order."

Lord North, true to his original principles of Toryism and High Churchism, rose with much zeal to oppose this dangerous attempt at innovation. Declaring himself a friend to toleration in its full extent, he conjured the House at the same time to consider, that the present motion went not merely to toleration, but to the repeal of an act which was the great bulwark of the Constitution, and to which we owed the inestimable blessings of freedom. The exclusion of the Dissenters from civil offices, Lord North said, was no injury or disgrace. The Test Act was merely a civil and political regulation; and the arguments against it were equally applicable to all those restrictions which the wisdom of government in all countries had found it necessary to establish. His Lordship mentioned the alarm of the Clergy at this attempt; and he added, that they all knew the pernicious nature of a cry, that THE CHURCH is in DANGER. There was no complaint of ecclesiastical tyranny;—universal toleration was established. Let them therefore be upon their guard against INNOVATION in the CHURCH, nor confound the toleration of religious opinions with the mode of admission to civil and military appointments."

Mr. Pitt enforced the arguments of Lord North, but with far more ability and address. He declared,

clared, in very flattering and explicit terms, the eſteem and regard which he entertained for the collective body of Proteſtant Diſſenters, who had ever approved themſelves the genuine and zealous friends of conſtitutional liberty; of which their conduct during the late political conflicts had exhibited a memorable proof, and he acknowledged with gratitude and pleaſure the honorable and unanimous ſupport which he had experienced from them at that momentous and intereſting criſis. He muſt nevertheleſs, however reluctantly, diſcharge what he conceived to be his indiſpenſable duty in oppoſing the preſent application for a repeal of the Corporation and Teſt Acts. It had been ſaid, If you grant this, the ſame perſons will ſoon come to you again to aſk ſomething more. This had no weight with him. He would not object to concede what he ought to concede, becauſe he might be aſked to concede what he ought not to concede. But a diſtinction was, in his opinion, here neceſſary to be made between political and civil liberty. The latter he contended that the Diſſenters already enjoyed in its fulleſt extent. The former was in fact nothing elſe than a diſtribution of power, which muſt be regulated by the diſcretion of the State. The employments and offices of the State were not the property of individuals; they were public truſts to be confided to thoſe who were politically competent to occupy them. The

Diſſenters

Diſſenters deſired, as a matter of right and juſtice, a participation of offices. If this were granted, they might acquire a dangerous aſcendency in corporations; and an excluſive corporation intereſt in the hands of the Diſſenters was a very different thing from the liberty of ſitting in that Houſe on the free choice of the general maſs of electors. It was now indeed aſſerted, that they had no ſuch object in contemplation. But it was neceſſary to take into the account the real ſprings by which human affairs were regulated, and not to depend upon the ſecurity of words in contradiſtinction to the tenor and tendency of actions. There were perſons amongſt the Diſſenters who would not admit any eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhment to be neceſſary. Againſt ſuch perſons it became the Legiſlature to be upon their guard. He had indeed an high opinion of the merits of Diſſenters; but they already enjoyed every mental privilege, every freedom to ſerve GOD according to their conſciences in the moſt ample degree."

The motion of Mr. Beauſoy was powerfully ſupported by Mr. Fox, who magnanimouſly declared, "that whatever perſonal reaſon he might have to complain of the recent conduct of the Diſſenters, he would never loſe ſight of the great principles of civil and religious liberty, on which the preſent application to the Houſe was founded. He had conſidered himſelf as honored in acting with them on many former occaſions, and he acknow-

ledged the general tenor of their political conduct to be in the higheſt degree meritorious. In his opinion, it was very unwiſe in any caſe to take religion as religion for a teſt in politics; and he averred, that the maxims advanced by Mr. Pitt were ſuch, that though he declined perſecution in words, he admitted the whole extent of it in principle." Upon a diviſion, after a long debate, the numbers appeared, for the motion 100, againſt it 178.

This was by no means, conſidering the oppoſition of the Miniſter to the motion, a diſcouraging diviſion on the firſt effort. But the Diſſenters were in the laſt degree aſtoniſhed and chagrined at the part taken by Mr. Pitt in this debate, it being almoſt univerſally underſtood by them, that the application would at leaſt not be diſcountenanced by him. And the expreſſions uſed by him in the previous conferences held with the leading Diſſenters, though far from amounting to a promiſe of ſupport, were conſidered as certain indications of a favorable diſpoſition. Doubtleſs Mr. Pitt found, in the progreſs of the buſineſs, obſtacles in the way of the repeal which he had not at firſt apprehended; and he flattered himſelf, that his public profeſſions of regard and eſteem for the Diſſenters would ſo far ſooth and conciliate their minds as to reconcile them to the diſappointment they ſuſtained. But

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the moſt refined addreſs, and the greateſt ability in the *management of buſineſs*, may eaſily be overrated. It was not poſſible for Mr. Pitt, on this grand queſtion, to ſtand well at once with the Court and with the Diſſenters. The Diſſenters clearly perceived the difference between the ſituation of Mr. Pitt and that of his predeceſſor Sir Robert Walpole, when the laſt application for a repeal of the Teſt was made on their part above fifty years before. That wiſe Miniſter, though his judgment was decidedly in favor of the repeal *abſtractedly conſidered*, was juſtly apprehenſive of the clamors which would have been unqueſtionably raiſed at that turbulent period againſt a meaſure, as the conſequence of which the weak, the bigoted, and the factious would have joined in vociferating, that the CHURCH was in DANGER. It was an experiment at that time not worth the riſque; and the Miniſter choſe the leaſt of the two evils, condeſcending himſelf to talk abſurdly, in order to prevent others from acting miſchievouſly. But that ſenſeleſs and terrific clamor had long ſince become a mere *brutum fulmen*. The application of the Diſſenters in the preſent inſtance was in uniſon with the general ſenſe of the Public and of the Parliament, or at leaſt not inconſiſtent with it; and a ſlight degree of countenance only from the Court would have ſufficed to enſure the ſucceſs of the motion: nor, on the other hand, was the oppoſition of the Court

Court so openly and decidedly hostile as to preclude the idea of future attempts.

The attention of the House and of the Nation was soon transferred to a subject of a very different nature. When the Prince of Wales attained the age of majority, A. D. 1783, the sum of fifty thousand pounds per annum only was allotted to him out of the Civil List revenue to defray the entire expence of his establishment. Considering the numerous salaries payable to the officers of his household, this sum was manifestly inadequate to the just support of his rank and situation in life; and the then Ministers, Mr. Fox and Lord North, strongly insisted upon the necessity of fixing the revenue of the Prince at one hundred thousand pounds per annum, which the late King had enjoyed as Prince of Wales at a period when the Civil List produced two hundred thousand pounds per annum less than at present. To this the Sovereign positively objected; and the Prince, in order to prevent disagreeable consequences, generously declared, that he chose to depend upon the spontaneous bounty of the King. The obvious result of this miserable œconomy was, that the Prince, in the four years which were now elapsed, had contracted debts to a large amount; his negligence as to pecuniary concerns being perhaps increased by the consciousness of the extreme difficulty and apparent impossibility of con-

tracting his expences within the narrow limits of his income. The public, not sufficiently adverting to these circumstances, censured the Prince with a too rigid severity for the heedlessness and prodigality of his conduct. The general prejudice was much heightened by the habitual and confidential intercourse maintained by the Prince with the great leaders of the late unpopular Administration. It was also too notorious to admit of disguise or palliation, that the Prince was exempt from none of those youthful indiscretions and excesses by which men of high rank in early life are for the most part so unhappily characterized.

A report of a very serious nature had moreover for some time past gained very general credit; namely, that the Prince had contracted a secret marriage with a lady of the Roman Catholic religion;—a fatal step, for which the acknowledged personal charms and mental accomplishments of Mrs. Fitzherbert (such was the name of the lady in question) would make in the public opinion a very inadequate compensation. It is true that the marriage, in whatever mode it were solemnized, could not by the Royal Marriage Act be regarded as legal; and by a clause in the Act of Settlement, if the legality of the marriage were affirmed, the Prince, by marrying a Papist, would *ipso facto* forfeit his right of succession to the Crown. His situation therefore was in the highest degree singular and

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critical, especially as the Marriage Act itself was by many persons considered as founded in such manifest absurdity and injustice, as to be in its own nature null and void. To balance these unfavorable circumstances, the Prince was said to possess good temper and good sense: his person was agreeable, his deportment affable and engaging, and, by mixing familiarly in the society of men of enlightened minds, he had, as there was good reason to believe, acquired far juster and more liberal ideas of the nature of government and the spirit of legislation than those which constituted the policy of the present reign. Happily also, as it was contrary to law for the Heir Apparent to leave the kingdom, he had the advantage of an English education, and his manners and modes of thinking were entirely English; while the German education of the Bishop of Osnaburgh, now Duke of York, and of the other younger branches of the Royal House, and their familiarity with the German Courts, could have no other tendency than to inspire them with sentiments totally opposite to the genius of the English Constitution. There is nothing indeed more surprising in the history of the present reign, than the tame acquiescence of the Legislature in so apparent an affront, as is implied in the supposition that an English Prince cannot receive an education in England proper for his station. England has, it must be confessed,

been indeed grosly and culpably inattentive to the education of her princes; and in this respect, as well as many others, the present reign will furnish to posterity a striking and instructive lesson.

Finding his embarrassments continually increasing, and a large debt accumulated, the Prince of Wales, in the summer of 1786, applied to the King his father for assistance: but meeting with a harsh and peremptory refusal, he adopted a resolution which seemed to indicate a firmness and vigor of mind, capable under a right direction of great and noble things. Suppressing the establishment of his household, he formally vested forty thousand pounds per annum of his revenue in the hands of trustees for the liquidation of his debts. His stud of running horses, his hunters, and even his coach-horses, were sold by public auction. The elegant improvements and additions making to the palace of Carlton House, where he resided, were suddenly stopped, and the most splendid apartments shut up from use; in this manner choosing to retire from the world, rather than forfeit the honor of a gentleman by practising on the credulity of his creditors.

Things had remained in this posture for near a twelvemonth, when the Prince was persuaded to give his assent to a proposal for laying the state of his affairs before Parliament; and on the 20th

of April Mr. Alderman Newnham, Member for the city of London, gave notice that he would bring forward a motion for an Addreſs to the King, praying him to take the ſituation of the Prince into conſideration, and to grant him ſuch relief as he in his wiſdom ſhould think fit, and pledging the Houſe to make good the ſame. This gave riſe to an intereſting converſation; and Mr. Newnham was, by the Miniſter and many other Members of the Houſe, earneſtly entreated to withdraw his motion, as fertile of inconvenience and miſchief.

Mr. Pitt ſaid, "that by the perſeverance of Mr. Newnham he ſhould be driven to the diſcloſure of circumſtances which he ſhould otherwiſe have thought it his duty to conceal." And Mr. Rolle, Member for Devonſhire, declared, "that the inveſtigation of this queſtion involved in it circumſtances which tended immediately to affect the Conſtitution in Church and State."

Mr. Fox, Mr. Sheridan, and other Gentlemen in the confidence of the Prince, declared that "there was nothing which the Prince of Wales leſs feared, than a full and impartial inveſtigation of his conduct; and nothing that his Royal Highneſs would more deprecate, than a ſtudied ambiguity or affected tenderneſs, on the pretence of reſpect or indulgence." Mr. Rolle was particularly

called upon, though in vain, to explain the extraordinary language he had uſed.

The ſubject being in a few days reſumed, Mr. Fox again called the attention of the Houſe to the declaration of Mr. Rolle. "To what that declaration alluded (Mr. Fox ſaid) it was impoſſible to aſcertain, till the perſon who made it thought proper to explain his meaning: but he ſuppoſed it muſt refer to that baſe and malicious calumny which had been propagated without doors by the enemies of the Prince, with a view to depreciate his character, and injure him in the eſteem of his country." Mr. Fox further declared, "that the Prince had authoriſed him to aſſert, that, as a Peer of Parliament, he was ready in the other Houſe to ſubmit to any the moſt pointed queſtions that could be put to him upon the ſubject, or to afford the King or his Miniſters the fulleſt aſſurances of the utter falſehood of the fact in queſtion."

Mr. Rolle now thought proper to acknowledge, that the ſubject upon which Mr. Fox had ſpoken, was the matter to which he had alluded as affecting both Church and State. He ſaid "that the reports relative to this tranſaction had made a deep impreſſion upon the minds of all men who loved and venerated the Conſtitution. He knew that this thing could not have been accompliſhed under the

the formal ſanction of law; but if it exiſted as a fact, it might be productive of the moſt alarming conſequences, and ought to be ſatisfactorily cleared up."

Mr. Fox replied, "that he did not deny the calumny in queſtion merely with regard to the effect of certain exiſting laws, but he denied it *in toto*, in fact as well as in law. The fact not only could never have happened legally, but never did happen in any way, and had from the beginning been a vile and malignant falſehood."

Mr. Rolle roſe again, and aſked, "whether in what he now aſſerted Mr. Fox ſpoke from direct authority?" Mr. Fox ſaid he had ſpoken from direct authority.

In conſequence of theſe explicit and authoritative aſſeverations, Mr. Rolle was loudly called upon to expreſs his ſatisfaction. But this he obſtinately declined, ſaying only "that the Houſe would judge for themſelves of what had paſſed." On this Mr. Sheridan was provoked to declare, "that if Mr. Rolle perſiſted in his refuſal, or otherwiſe to put the matter into ſuch a ſtate of enquiry as *ſhould* ſatisfy him, the Houſe ought to come to a reſolution, 'that it was ſeditious and diſloyal to propagate reports injurious to the character of the Prince."

Mr. Pitt now properly interpoſed, and proteſted againſt ſo flagrant an attack on the free-

dom of ſpeech and deliberation in that Houſe. And it muſt be confeſſed that Mr. Rolle was ſo far juſtified as the voice of the public could juſtify him, in retaining his doubts; for a general and firm perſuaſion ſtill prevailed of a ſecret marriage between the Prince and Mrs. Fitzherbert: though no one preſumed to call in queſtion the honor of Mr. Fox in the declarations made by him in the Prince's name, for which he undoubtedly had, or thought he had, ſufficient authority, and which operated to the perfect apparent conviction of the Houſe of Commons; though, to complete the myſtery and perplexity of the buſineſs, it was ſubſequently reported and believed that a temporary coolneſs at leaſt had taken place between the Prince and Mr. Fox from the æra of this debate, and as the conſequence of that warmth of indignation which carried Mr. Fox inadvertently beyond the ſtrict limits of his commiſſion.

In this ſtage of the buſineſs an interview, at the deſire of the King, took place between the Prince of Wales and Mr. Pitt at Carlton Houſe; and the Prince was informed, "that if the intended motion were withdrawn, every thing might be ſettled to his Royal Highneſs's ſatisfaction." This being acceded to, a meſſage was delivered by the Miniſter from the King to the Houſe, ſtating his Majeſty's great concern, "that from the accounts of

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the Prince of Wales it had appeared that he had incurred a debt to a large amount, which, painful as it was to him to propoſe any addition to the burdens of his people, he was induced by his paternal affection to the Prince, to deſire the aſſiſtance of Parliament to diſcharge—on the well-grounded expectation, nevertheleſs, of the Prince's avoiding to contract any ſimilar debt in future; with a view to which, the King had directed a ſum of ten thouſand pounds to be paid out of the Civil Liſt, in addition to his former allowance."

On the very next day after the accounts referred to in the Royal Meſſage were laid before the Houſe, and of which the dignified generoſity of the Houſe ſuffered not the inſpection, an Addreſs was voted to the King, to requeſt him to direct the ſum of one hundred and ſixty-one thouſand pounds to be paid out of the Civil Liſt for the full diſcharge of the debts of the Prince of Wales, and the farther ſum of twenty thouſand pounds to complete the repairs of Carlton Houſe.

It may be remarked, in diſmiſſing this ſubject, that the ſum of fifty thouſand pounds had been already actually expended on Carlton Houſe; ſo that, if the Prince had enjoyed a revenue equal to that of the late King when Prince of Wales, there would have accrued in the four years elapſed ſince his majority a very conſiderable ſaving, notwithſtanding

ſtanding that extraordinary expence; and thus the complaints of extravagance do not appear to reſt upon a very ſolid foundation.

The ſubject of Mr. Haſtings's impeachment had been reſumed early in the preſent ſeſſion, and had occupied a large proportion of it. The primary charge reſpecting the Rohilla war, brought forward by Mr. Burke towards the concluſion of the ſeſſion of 1786, had made a deep impreſſion upon the Houſe: and although Mr. Haſtings had been acquitted of the charge, it was upon grounds on which it was impoſſible to reſt his future defence.

The conduct of Mr. Pitt had been hitherto indeciſive and myſterious; but the part taken by Mr. Jenkinſon, and the party of which he was conſidered as the head, left no room for doubt as to the ſecret inclination of the Court: and although Mr. Pitt, on the Benares charge, ſtated by Mr. Fox, had voted againſt Mr. Haſtings, he expreſsly declared that he did not, *upon that account*, conſider himſelf as committed to a final vote of impeachment. The grand queſtion therefore ſtill remained doubtful, when on the 7th of February 1787 Mr. Sheridan opened the third charge reſpecting the Begum Princeſſes of Oude, with an eloquence and energy which were perhaps never ſurpaſſed, and which, in their conſequences, proved entirely deciſive.

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The ſubſtance of this, as of the other principal charges, has already been recorded in the regular narration of India tranſactions. A ſlight extract or two from Mr. Sheridan's ſpeech may ſerve to excite a faint idea of the tranſcendent ability with which this charge was enforced:—

Mr. Sheridan ſaid, "that the conduct of Mr. Haſtings reſpecting the Nabob and Begums of Oude comprehended in it every ſpecies of human offence. He had been guilty of rapacity at once violent and inſatiable, of treachery cool and premeditated, of oppreſſion unprovoked, of barbarity wanton and unmanly. So long ſince as the year 1775 the Begum Princeſs, widow of Sujah ul Dowla, had written to Mr. Haſtings in the following moving terms:—'If it is your pleaſure that the mother of the late Nabob, that myſelf, his other women, and his infant children ſhould be reduced to a ſtate of diſhonor and diſtreſs, we muſt ſubmit. But if, on the contrary, you call to mind the friendſhip of the late bleſſed Nabob, you will exert yourſelf effectually in favor of us who are helpleſs.' Inflamed by diſappointment at Benares, he haſtened to the fortreſs of Chunar, to put in execution the atrocious deſign of inſtigating the Nabob, ſon of this Princeſs, to parricide and plunder. No ſooner had Mr. Haſtings determined to invade the ſubſtance of Juſtice, than he reſolved to avail himſelf of her judicial forms, and diſpatched

diſpatched a meſſenger for the Chief Juſtice of India to aſſiſt him in perpetrating the violence he had meditated. Without a moment's pauſe, or the ſhadow of proceſs inſtituted, ſentence was pronounced. And thus, at the ſame time that the ſword of Government was converted to an aſſaſſin's dagger, the pure ermine of Juſtice was ſtained and ſoiled with the baſeſt contamination. It was clear to demonſtration, that the Begums were not concerned in the inſurrection of Benares. No, their treaſures were their treaſon. If (ſaid this eloquent ſpeaker) the mind of Mr. Haſtings were ſuſceptible of ſuperſtition, he might image the proud ſpirit of Sujah ul Dowla looking down upon the ruin and devaſtation of his family; beholding the palace which he had adorned with the ſpoils of the devoted Rohillas, plundered by his baſe and perfidious ally; and viewing the man whom on his death-bed he had conſtituted the guardian of his wife, his mother, and his family, forcibly expoſing thoſe dear relations, the objects of his ſolemn truſt, to the rigor of the mercileſs ſeaſons, or the violence of the more mercileſs ſoldiery.—Such were the awful diſpenſations of retributive juſtice!—It was not given to that Houſe to witneſs the tremulous joys of the millions whom the vote of that night would ſave from the cruelty of corrupted power. But the bleſſings of the people thus delivered, would not be diſſipated in

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empty air. No; they would lift up their prayers to Heaven in gratitude to the power which, by ſtretching its mighty arm acroſs the deep, had ſaved them from ruin and deſtruction."

On this occaſion Mr. Pitt acted a part which did him great honor. Though the eloquence of Mr. Sheridan had excited a ſpirit of enthuſiaſm in the Houſe, which perhaps no degree of miniſterial influence could have counteracted, it would be highly invidious and unjuſt to attribute the decided conduct of Mr. Pitt on this memorable night to the apprehenſion of being left in a minority by an attempt to negative the motion. On the contrary, he appeared penetrated with a perfect conviction of the atrocity of the facts, and of the ſtrength of the evidence by which they were ſupported. And the Miniſter, who in the comparatively inſignificant buſineſs of an election return could ſo far degrade himſelf as to countenance, and even publicly to vindicate, an act of deliberate injuſtice, now felt all the ſympathies of humanity, all the energies of virtue, awakened in his breaſt, and impelling him to teſtify, in terms the moſt explicit and expreſſive, his deteſtation of perfidy ſo vile, of cruelty ſo remorſeleſs. On a diviſion the numbers were, in favor of the motion 175, againſt it 68.

On the 2d of March Mr. Pelham opened the charge

charge relative to the Nabob of Ferruckabad, which was affirmed by 112 againſt 50 voices.

On the 15th of March the charge upon the ſubject of contracts was brought forward by Sir James Erſkine. "All of them," Sir James Erſkine obſerved, "were made in direct violation of the regulations of the Court of Directors, "that the contracts ſhould be given from year to year, that they ſhould be publicly advertiſed, and be diſpoſed of to the beſt bidder.' The contract for rice was avowedly given to Mr. Auriol, as 'a reward for his long and faithful ſervices.' Of his expenditure no vouchers were required, but the accounts were to be given in upon honor. This mode of paſſing accounts was (the Honorable mover obſerved) peculiar to India, as indeed honor there was of a peculiar nature. It dreaded the production of proofs, had an intuitive abhorrence of being confronted with truth, and ſhrunk like the ſenſitive plant from the touch of enquiry. The opium contract Mr. Sullivan, ſon to the Chairman of the India Company, had immediately SOLD for a clear profit of fifty-two thouſand pounds. Another contract had been given to Mr. Archibald Fraſer, the near relation of Sir Elijah Impey, who had thought it neceſſary to diſpatch affidavits to England, for the purpoſe of clearing himſelf from the ſuſpicion of participating

ing in the profits accruing from it. These affidavits (Sir James said) were the pastoral essays of the learned Judge, his songs *in ripas et flumina*, the forerunners only of those epic attestations, the *prælia et reges*, by which he had commemorated the wars of Benares and the rebellion of Oude." On this article the division was, ayes 60, noes 26.

Upon the 23d of March the charge relative to Fyzoola Khan was brought forward by Mr. Windham. This was carried on a division of 96 against 37 voices.

On the 2d of April Mr. Sheridan opened to the House the charge upon the subject of presents: upon which occasion he observed, "that the late Governor General had, in every part of his conduct, exhibited proofs of a wild, eccentric, and irregular mind. He had been every thing by starts, and nothing long—now high and lofty, now mean and insidious—now artful and temporising, now rigid and inflexible—in pride, in passion, in all things changeable except in corruption. His revenge was a tempest, a *tornado* blackening the horizon, and involving all within the sphere of its influence in one common destruction. But his corruption was regular and systematic, a *monsoon* blowing uniformly from one point of the compass, and wafting the wealth of India to the same port in one certain direction."

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Upon a diviſion, the numbers appeared, ayes 165; noes 54.

On the 19th of April the charge reſpecting the revenues was opened by Mr. Francis, who had formerly occupied with ſo much honor to himſelf, but ſo unavailingly as to the public, the office of Member of the Supreme Council in India, and who had recently taken his ſeat as a Member of the Houſe of Commons. This charge was of a very important and intereſting nature; and Mr. Francis entered into a moſt able and elaborate diſcuſſion of it. He ſhewed, from the very nature of their tenure, "that the Zemindars were not mere collectors of the revenue, as they had been artfully repreſented by Mr. Haſtings, but real land-holders poſſeſſing a permanent, diviſible, and hereditary property, deſcending even to women. He enumerated the different modes of managing the revenues of Bengal, adopted by Mr. Haſtings in the courſe of thirteen years. "The object of Mr. Haſtings, he ſaid, was to avoid coming to a fixed ſettlement, for then there muſt be an end of peculation. At the time of his acceſſion to the government the provinces had not perfectly recovered the effects of the dreadful famine which had taken place in Bengal at a very recent period; yet then did the Committee of Circuit, under the ſanction of Mr. Haſtings, raiſe the

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rents of the zemindaries to an unheard-of ſtandard; and by the enſuing project of 1781, the whole landed property of the country was put up to a pretended auction; the proprietors were univerſally deprived of their eſtates, and banyans, cheats, and adventurers of all ſorts, put into poſſeſſion of their lands. Under this ſettlement Cantoo Baboo, Mr. Haſtings's banyan, held farms to the amount of 135,000l. per annum. The Directors had ordered the perſons compoſing the Committee of Circuit to be proſecuted, but Mr. Haſtings had ordered the proſecution to be withdrawn. A Committee of Revenue was ſubſequently introduced under the influence of Gunga Govind Sing, a notorious and adroit villain, which completed the ruin of the country. When Mr. Haſtings came into poſſeſſion of the Bengal Government, he found it a fertile, populous, and proſperous country; it contained a regular gradation of ranks like a pyramid, from a well-ordered yeomanry to ſovereign princes: but theſe diſtinctions have been broken down—the whole nation has been pounded as it were by the oppreſſion of the Government into one maſs—and the prince was no otherwiſe diſcoverable from the peaſant than by the ſuperiority of his ſufferings, and the more pungent bitterneſs of his humiliations." Mr. Francis concluded in theſe remarkable words:—"My particular labor is now at an end. An unremitting perſeverance of thirteen years has

at last conducted me to that issue which has been the object of all my efforts. Mr. Hastings must now be impeached—let him have a fair trial—I desire no more. In arriving at that object I have secured every personal purpose that I ever had in view; the reputation of Sir John Clavering, Colonel Monson, and myself, is secure; your votes are my authority: the House of Commons are my compurgators. The only victory I ever aimed at was to clear my character from foul aspersion, and to establish, as I trust I have done, the integrity of my conduct in the estimation of my country." This charge was confirmed, notwithstanding the unexpected dissent of the Minister, by 71 to 55 voices.

On the 9th of May the report made by Mr. Burke from the Committee, to whom it had been referred to prepare the articles of impeachment, was confirmed by the House, ayes 175, noes 89. On the following day it was voted that Mr. Hastings be IMPEACHED: and Mr. Burke accordingly, in the name of the House of Commons, and of all the Commons of Great Britain, repaired to the bar of the House of Lords, and impeached Mr. Hastings of high crimes and misdemeanors—at the same time acquainting their Lordships, that the Commons would with all convenient speed exhibit articles against him, and make good the same.

On the 14th another charge respecting misdemeanors

meanors in Oude was added to the former by Mr. Burke, and voted without a diviſion. On the ſame day the articles actually prepared were ſent to the Lords; and on the 21ſt Mr. Haſtings, being conducted to the bar of that Houſe by the Serjeant at Arms, was taken into the cuſtody of the Black Rod, but on the motion of the Lord Chancellor was admitted to bail—himſelf in 20,000l. and two ſureties, Mr. Sullivan and Mr. Sumner, in 10,000l. each; and he was ordered to deliver in an anſwer to the articles of impeachment in one month from that time, or upon the ſecond day of the next ſeſſion of Parliament.

On the 30th of May (1787) the King put an end to the preſent ſeſſion by a ſpeech, applauding "the meaſures taken by Parliament reſpecting the reduction of the national debt, and the treaty of navigation and commerce with the Moſt Chriſtian King. He ſpoke of the general tranquillity of Europe, and lamented the DISSENSIONS which unhappily prevailed amongſt the STATES of the UNITED PROVINCES." This then is the proper period to pauſe, and take a retroſpective view of the politics of the Continent, and of the origin and progreſs of theſe diſſenſions.

If the embarraſſments of Great Britain at the return of peace, in conſequence of the alarming addition of debt contracted during the war, were very great, thoſe of France it muſt be confeſſed were of ſtill greater magnitude. The finances of

France during the war had been committed to the management of M. Necker, a Genevan proteſtant, a man of ſtrict probity, of genuine philanthropy, of extenſive knowledge in the detail of affairs, but who, nevertheleſs, appears to have been deſtitute of thoſe clear and comprehenſive views which diſtinguiſh the great and enlightened ſtateſman; and his vanity, oſtentation, and egotiſm formed a great deduction from the aggregate of his virtues. This celebrated financier conceived the romantic and impracticable plan of raiſing the loans neceſſary for the ſervice of the war upon the credit of funds to be created by œconomical ſavings in the public expenditure. The revenue of France was indeed immenſe, not perhaps falling ſhort in the groſs receipt of twenty-five millions ſterling; but the civil, military, and naval eſtabliſhments of that vaſt kingdom were alſo upon a proportionable ſcale: and if it had been poſſible, which it certainly was not, by any efforts within the compaſs of M. Necker's ability, effectually to have counteracted that ſpirit of extravagance and corruption which had ſo long pervaded all the departments of government in France, and to have ſubſtituted in their ſtead the order and frugality of his native republic, ſtill an enormous deficiency muſt ultimately have reſulted from a ſcheme ſo viſionary and chimerical as that of carrying on a war without taxes. At the æra of the peace this was found to be actually the caſe; and M. Necker, who had en-

raged one party by his attempts, and disappointed the other by his failures, was compelled to resign to M. de Calonne, a man of great talents, but who, immersed in dissipation and intrigue, and neither able nor solicitous to reform the abuses of the government, proposed to supply the present grand deficiency in the revenue in the usual way by new and heavy imposts.

The excessive and notorious derangement of the French finances, and the consequent indisposition of the Court of Versailles to involve itself in hostilities with any of the leading powers of Europe, probably emboldened the restless and ambitious spirit of the Emperor, who also doubtless relied on the influence of the Queen his sister in the Cabinet of France, to venture upon measures which the most powerful of his predecessors would have regarded as rash and presumptuous. Taking advantage of the animosity subsisting between the maritime powers, he had during the late war formally cancelled the barrier treaty originally concluded under the guarantee of England, and had dismissed the Dutch garrisons from the frontier towns of the Low Countries. In the vain expectation of permanent amity with France, he had even dismantled the greater part of those important fortresses, leaving by this means the country wholly exposed, in case of a future rupture, to the inroads of that formidable power.

Elated with the facility with which he had ac-

compliſhed this object, he, in the autumn of the year 1783, ſuddenly demanded of the States General the appointment of a Commiſſion to meet at Bruſſels, for the accurate aſcertainment of the boundaries of the Dutch and Auſtrian Netherlands. While this extraordinary demand was under diſcuſſion, a detachment of the Auſtrian troops entered the Dutch territory, and ſeized upon two ſmall forts in the neighbourhood of Sluys; and a new demand was made of a free navigation of the Scheldt beyond Fort Lillo, as far as the land of Saftingen. Conferences being at length agreed upon to be held at Bruſſels, in order to the final ſettlement of theſe claims, the Plenipotentiaries of the Emperor delivered in to thoſe of the States General, May 1784, the entire demands of his Imperial Majeſty, purporting the enlargement of his boundaries on the ſide of Breda and Bois-le-duc; the demolition of the forts Kruickſhank and Frederic-Henry; the inland navigation of the Scheldt as far as Saftingen; the requiſition of various ſums of money pretended to have been due to the Emperor ſince the beginning of the preſent century; and the CESSION of the CITY of MAESTRICHT, and the contiguous diſtrict of Outre Meuſe, diſjoined from the general maſs of the Dutch poſſeſſions.

The States, aſtoniſhed and alarmed at theſe novel claims, were urgent to obtain the mediation of the Court of Verſailles. The ſituation of Holland was indeed

indeed at this period ſuch as to make all oppoſition apparently fruitleſs. The weight which ſhe had been accuſtomed to derive from her intimate connection and alliance with England was no more; and in conſequence of a ſtrange fatality, ſhe was now reduced to the humiliating neceſſity of reſorting for protection to that very power by whom her liberties had been ſo frequently menaced, and at one time ſo nearly ſubverted. Since the termination of the war with England ſhe had been diſtracted with internal commotions. A great majority of the Dutch nation accuſed with vehemence the Prince of Orange of groſs and flagrant partiality to England during the war. It was affirmed that he had *betrayed his country*, in leaving her intentionally deſtitute of the means of defence; and that he had conſtantly and ſyſtematically counteracted the exertions of thoſe who were earneſtly deſirous to have carried on the war with vigor and effect. The perſon by whoſe counſels the Prince of Orange was ſuppoſed to be chiefly influenced—Prince Louis of Brunſwick, guardian to the Stadtholder during his minority, and Generaliſſimo of the Dutch forces—was even ſaid to be a penſioner of England; and ſo high did the public clamor ariſe againſt him, that he found it neceſſary to reſign his offices civil and military, and retire from the country. This was far however from ſatisfying the diſaffected party, which ſeemed continually to increaſe as well in numbers as inveteracy. The authority

of the Prince, as eſtabliſhed by the Conſtitution of 1747, was aſſailed in almoſt every province, and particularly the great and leading province of Holland, by all the poſſible modes of attack; and the very exiſtence of the Stadtholderate ſeemed to have become a queſtion of precarious and problematic import.

In theſe circumſtances it was not wonderful that the Emperor, whoſe rapacity was unreſtrained by even the ſhadow of principle, depending upon the acquieſcence of France, again roſe in his demands. In what he ſtyled his ultimatum, delivered in Auguſt 23, 1784, his Imperial Majeſty obſerving "that divers difficulties had occurred in the diſcuſſion of his claims, and that a ſpeedy termination of thoſe differences was ardently deſired by him, offered to depart from his juſt demand upon the city of Maeſtricht, and to moderate his other requiſitions, in conſideration of the free and unlimited navigation of the Scheldt in both branches to the ſea. His Imperial Majeſty, not doubting but the States would accept with eagerneſs ſo unqueſtionable a mark of his good will, had thought proper to regard the Scheldt as open, and to declare its navigation free from the date of this paper; and he concluded, that on the ſuppoſition of any inſult being offered to the Imperial flag in the execution of theſe ideas, he ſhould be obliged to conſider it as a formal declaration of war on the part of the Republic.

This memorial was as a ſtroke of thunder to the Dutch

Dutch nation. The commercial grandeur of Holland had risen upon the ruins of Antwerp; and though it is probable that, if the free navigation of the Scheldt had been now restored to that once famous mart, the course of trade could not have been easily or speedily diverted from its accustomed channels, the fears of the Dutch were wrought up to the highest pitch of apprehension. The States in their answer protested against this new claim, as the flagrant invasion of a right which they considered as the most valuable of their possessions. In order to establish this demand they observed "that the Emperor must contravene the treaty by which they had been acknowledged as independent States, and also that by which the House of Austria had been put into possession of the Austrian Netherlands. They considered their prosperity, their dignity, and their existence, as linked to the perpetual conservation of this sovereignty, and declared it to be a pretension from which they would never depart.

Early in the month of October (1784) a small vessel sailed from Antwerp, amid the shouts and acclamations of the inhabitants, with the intention of ascertaining this important point. On the arrival of the Imperial brigantine before the fort of Lillo, an account of its destination was demanded. On the refusal of the officer to answer, a single ball was fired; and no regard being paid to this intimation, a whole broadside was discharged, and the vessel

veſſel immediately ſtruck her colors. This reſolute proceeding on the part of the Dutch excited the utmoſt aſtoniſhment of the Emperor, who had treated the ſage remonſtrances of his Prime Miniſter, Prince Kaunitz, on this ſubject with contempt—repeatedly and peremptorily affirming, "*that the Dutch would never dare to fire.*" The Emperor being in Hungary when this intelligence arrived, the Prince wrote to his Imperial Majeſty the following laconic letter of information, "*But they have fired.*" Immediately the conferences at Bruſſels were broken up, the Imperial Ambaſſador at the Hague was recalled, and hoſtile preparations were made on both ſides.

It was at this critical moment that the Court of Verſailles interpoſed in a manner the moſt efficacious to preſerve the Dutch nation from the ruin which threatened them. Notwithſtanding the alliance which had now for thirty years ſubſiſted between the Courts of Vienna and Verſailles; notwithſtanding the ties of blood which connected the two Sovereigns; notwithſtanding the pacific diſpoſition of the French Monarch, and the financial embarraſſments of the government; on this great occaſion all the antient jealouſy of the great rival Houſes of Bourbon and Auſtria ſeemed to revive. A letter written with his Moſt Chriſtian Majeſty's own hand to the Emperor, dated November 20, (1784) pointed out the eſſential diſtinction between the

the primary and ultimate demands of the Emperor. As to the former, the King of France declared himself neutral; but he protested in the strongest terms against any violation of the rights of the States General respecting the navigation of the Scheldt—a right exercised by them for near one hundred and fifty years under the sanction of a sacred treaty. His Most Christian Majesty exhorted the Emperor therefore to listen to the voice of moderation and humanity, and to assent to a renewal of the conferences under his mediation. To enforce this amicable overture a great army was assembled in the vicinity of Luxemburg; the Marquis de Verac, who possessed the entire confidence of M. de Vergennes the French Minister, was dispatched as Ambassador extraordinary to the Hague; and the Mareschal de Maillebois, an officer of high reputation in the French service, was *permitted* to take the command in chief of the Dutch forces *.

The Emperor now thought proper to declare his acceptance of the proffered mediation, provided the freedom of the Scheldt, *or the cession of Maestricht*,

* On the convening of a Cabinet Council about this period at Versailles preparatory to the final resolution, the Queen of France is reported to have said to the Count de Vergennes, as the Minister was passing to the Council Chamber, "Remember, Sir, in your deliberations, that the Emperor is my brother." The Count, casting his eyes on the Dauphin, whom the Queen then held in her arms, with great happiness replied, "Yes, madam, and I shall also recollect that the Dauphin of France is your son."

to

to which he once again condescended to advert, were made the preliminaries of the negotiation. But the Dutch, animated by the avowed protection, and incited no doubt also by the secret suggestions of France, now peremptorily refused to accede to either of these very unequal alternatives. After an interval of decent delay, the Emperor with his characteristic inconstancy relinquished both these favorite objects, the latter of which at least, had he never extended his views beyond it, he had once a fair prospect of accomplishing. But, as if eager to recover by his pride the reputation he had lost by his folly, he insisted that the Dutch States should make a public submission, and apologize by a formal embassy for the insult offered to his flag at Lillo.

The Barons Wassanaer and Leyden being deputed to the Court of Vienna for this purpose, conferences were again opened, and in a short time a treaty of pacification was signed (November 8, 1784), importing that the States should pay the sum of ten millions of florins as an indemnification for the claim of the Emperor upon Maestricht and its territory, and as a compensation for the damage done by the late inundations; the inland navigation of the Scheldt was extended to the town of Saftingen, and the forts of Liefkinshoek and Lillo ceded to the Emperor.

The inflated and almost ludicrous style of the com-

complimentary addreſs of the Dutch Ambaſſadors at their audience of leave, ſufficiently ſhews the idea entertained by them of the character of the Emperor. "May the glorious reign of your Imperial Majeſty (ſay their Excellencies), deſtined to complete the felicity of your ſubjects, daily adminiſter to fame the beſt means to extend and perpetuate your great and awful name! May the æra of Joſeph II. like that of TITUS, TRAJANUS, and MARCUS AURELIUS, your predeceſſors in the ROMAN EMPIRE, be ever recorded as that of humanity, peace, and the happineſs of mankind!"

It is remarkable that England during theſe tranſactions looked on with the moſt perfect indifference, or even with apparent pleaſure—never dreaming that her intereſts were eſſentially affected by the queſtion relative to the navigation of the Scheldt; and much leſs was either Court or Country at this period infected with the *mania* of ſuppoſing it neceſſary or expedient to enter into a WAR, in order to prevent the people of Flanders from freely enjoying what GOD and Nature had freely beſtowed. Nor indeed would the utmoſt efforts of England probably have availed in oppoſition to the projects of the Emperor, in caſe of the acquieſcence of France.

When a great nation interferes in the concerns of her neighbors, true policy and dignity require not only that the object which ſhe aims to effect

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be juſt and important in itſelf, that it be clearly and diſtinctly marked, but alſo, without any exceſſive or diſproportionate exertion, attainable. This was a caſe in which, from local and other unalterable circumſtances, France could interpoſe, not only with far more propriety, as a guarantee of the treaty of Weſtphalia, but with infinitely greater effect, than England. And GEORGE III. prompted merely *perhaps* by motives of unappeaſed reſentment, acted preciſely the part which the penetration and diſcretion of an ELIZABETH would have ſuggeſted.

The treaty of peace between Holland and the Emperor was immediately followed by a treaty of alliance and friendſhip between Holland and France. This was no doubt an event neither pleaſant nor honorable to England; but it was the natural and unavoidable reſult of the abſurd and miſchievous politics long ago adopted by the Engliſh Court, and of the novel ſituation in which Holland had been conſequently placed. But as to any ſerious inconvenience to be apprehended from this or any other defection of the ſame nature, England under a wiſe ſyſtem of government, ſuch as had in the main been acted upon ſince the diſmiſſion of the old execrable Adminiſtration, might ſtand alone the envy and admiration of the world.

The buſineſs of the Scheldt might be ſuppoſed to have engroſſed the attention of the Emperor;

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on the contrary, while the iſſue of it was yet unknown, a negotiation of ſtill greater importance, and of a nature ſtrangely incompatible with the former, was carried on with the Elector of Bavaria, for the exchange of that extenſive and commodious territory for the whole of the Auſtrian Netherlands, which were for this purpoſe to be converted into a kingdom under the antient and long-ſince obſolete appellation of Auſtraſia. This deſign could not eſcape the ſagacity of the King of Pruſſia, nor the eſſential advantage which the Houſe of Auſtria would derive from the ceſſion of a large and fertile country contiguous to the general maſs of its poſſeſſions, in lieu of a detached territory expenſive and difficult to defend. In order to counteract this new attempt of the Court of Vienna, ſo hoſtile to the liberty and independency of the Germanic body, a treaty was ſigned at Berlin by his Pruſſian Majeſty, the King of Great Britain as Elector of Hanover, and the Elector of Saxony, to which the Duke of Deux-ponts, the Margrave of Anſpach, and other princes afterwards acceded. This formidable confederation was expreſsly affirmed to be intended for maintaining the indiviſibility of the Empire, the rights of the Germanic body in general, and of the reſpective States in particular.

In a declaration ſubſequently iſſued by the King of Pruſſia, that Monarch inſiſts on the danger to be apprehended from the riſing power of Auſtria, and

and asserts, "that the addition of so extensive and flourishing a country as Bavaria to the dominions of that ambitious House, must effectually destroy the balance of Germany, if not of Europe—and must end in the annihilation of all the subordinate States which enter into the composition of the Germanic body." The Duke of Deux-ponts also, heir to the Elector, protested against the alienation of his patrimony; and the Court of St. Petersburg shewed itself, as formerly, decidedly hostile to the annexation of Bavaria to the Austrian dominions. So impracticable did it appear in the face of these impediments to proceed in the execution of their project, that the Courts of Vienna and Munich were compelled, in the spring of 1785, publicly to contradict the report, and to assert that the convention between them had no farther object than the adjustment of the limits of their respective countries.

Notwithstanding the dangerous contest in which Holland found herself involved with the Court of Vienna, the domestic contentions of the Republic suffered no abatement. The party antiently in opposition to the House of Orange, known by the appellation of the Louvestein party, and who consisted chiefly of the provincial aristocracies, or rather oligarchies, of the Union, had been recently reinforced by a heterogeneous coalition with the zealous partisans of democracy, who equally wished

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for the total annihilation of the Stadtholderian influence and authority. On the repreſentation of the Deputies of Haerlem, reſpecting the riotous diſpoſition of the populace of the Hague diſtinguiſhed by their attachment to the Stadtholder, the care of the military patrole of that place, veſted in the Prince of Orange, was transferred to thoſe Deputies by a formal reſolution of the States of Holland. The Prince, after warmly remonſtrating againſt this inſult, and vainly inſiſting upon his claim to the undivided command of the garriſon of the Hague, withdrew himſelf from the ſeat of Government (Sept. 14, 1785), and retired to his palace of Loo.

The States of Holland, far from feeling diſpoſed to recede from their reſolution, ſolemnly voted the States and Senates of the different Provinces to be the undoubted Sovereigns, and the Stadtholder to be their ſervant: hence inferring, that the powers ſo exerciſed were only delegated, and that the State might reſume them whenever it ſaw ſufficient reaſon;—concluding, that the entire command of the garriſon ſhould hereafter veſt in the Council Committee of the States of Holland.

At this period a Memorial was preſented to the States General by the Ambaſſador of Pruſſia, in the name of the King his maſter, ſtrongly urging the interpoſition of their High Mightineſſes, in order that the Prince Stadtholder might peaceably

enjoy the rights and inconteſtable prerogatives appertaining to his dignity of hereditary Stadtholder.

This application produced not the leaſt effect. The States of Holland, who, as became their ſuperior importance, aſſumed the lead in the oppoſition to the Stadtholder, ordered, as if in contempt of this interference, the arms of the Houſe of Orange to be taken out of the colors of the troops belonging to that province, and that the Swiſs guards attendant on the perſon of the Prince ſhould be diſbanded.

The towns of Hattem and Elbourg in the province of Guelderland, having manifeſted a peculiarly refractory and rebellious diſpoſition, the States of Gueldres, in which Aſſembly the Orange intereſt yet predominated, commiſſioned the Stadtholder to employ military force for the reduction of the Burghers. But the States of Holland, Zealand, Overyſſel and Groningen joined in prohibiting the troops of their reſpective provinces from acting in this ſervice. The towns in queſtion were however attacked and captured by the Prince; and Utrecht, which had deeply imbibed the ſame ſentiments, was, in conſequence of their reſiſtance to the States of that Province now aſſembled at Amersfort, expected to be immediately inveſted. On this intelligence, the States of Holland diſpatched a letter to the Prince, demanding of him in twenty-four hours an explicit declaration

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of his intentions. The troops of the province were at the ſame time ordered to march to the frontier for the protection of Utrecht, and a *cordon* was formed from Naerden to Schoonhoven. And notwithſtanding an explanation and apology from the Prince, within the time preſcribed, the States of Holland proceeded (Sept. 16, 1786) to the violent reſolution of ſuſpending him from his office of Captain General of the province, by a majority of ſixteen out of nineteen voices of which that Aſſembly is compoſed.

The Prince of Orange on this occaſion addreſſed a long and elaborate letter to the States of Holland. He had expreſsly ſaid in his former remonſtrance, relative to the garriſon of the Hague, "We have not the moſt diſtant intention to queſtion the ſuperiority of your Noble and Great Mightineſſes over the military, as well of the whole province as the garriſon of the Hague. Never, ſays he, could we ſuppoſe ourſelves inveſted with a power equal, much leſs ſuperior, to that of the States over the military, and that we might act according to our own pleaſure, and independently of the SOVEREIGN." But he now ventured to aſſume an higher tone; and declaring "his office of hereditary Captain General of Holland and Weſt Friezland to have been ſecured to him by the unanimous vote of all the members of the State, he affirmed, that as the reſolution by which the office

had been conferred, paſſed *nemine contradicente*, it could not, *ſuppoſing it to be revocable*, be cancelled or even ſuſpended without the like unanimity."

This ſudden haughtineſs of language may, without heſitation, be attributed to an event of great moment, which had recently taken place in the death of Frederic II. King of Pruſſia (Auguſt 17, 1786), who was ſucceeded by his nephew Frederic William, to whom the Prince of Orange was nearly allied by marriage to his ſiſter, the Princeſs Wilhelmina of Pruſſia.

The new Monarch, feeling for the ſituation of his relatives, and eager to make a diſplay of his power, entered with far more zeal into the intereſts of the Prince than his illuſtrious predeceſſor, who during a reign of forty-ſix years had excited the admiration of Europe by the greatneſs of his talents and the ſplendor of his ſucceſſes. He had raiſed Pruſſia from obſcurity and inſignificance to the rank of a firſt-rate power in Europe; and had left his ſucceſſor in poſſeſſion of a flouriſhing kingdom, an immenſe treaſure, and an army of 200,000 men in the higheſt reputation for courage and diſcipline.

In a Memorial preſented by the Count de Goertz, his Pruſſian Majeſty's Ambaſſador Extraordinary to the States General (Sept. 18, 1786), he expreſſes without reſerve "the warm part which he takes in the unhappy diſſenſions ſubſiſting between

ſome of the provinces and the Stadtholder, and the very extraordinary oppreſſions which that Prince is innocently obliged to ſuffer—and urging that a durable termination may be put to theſe differences, in order that his Serene Highneſs the Prince Stadtholder may return with honor and propriety to the Hague, and reſume his high employments—inſiſting alſo upon the great intereſt he had, as the neareſt neighbour of the United Provinces, that the government of the Republic conformable to the antient conſtitution ſhould not be changed in any eſſential point."

A ſhort time previous to the delivery of this paper, a Memorial had been preſented to the States on the part of the King of England, containing in language ſomewhat more guarded the ſame ſentiments; proteſting indeed againſt the interference of any foreign power in the internal affairs of the Republic, the management and direction of which it is declared to be the wiſh of his Britannic Majeſty to preſerve uncontrolled in the hands of thoſe to whom it has been committed by the CONSTITUTION."

Notwithſtanding this powerful interference in behalf of the Prince of Orange, the States of Holland ſhewed themſelves in the higheſt degree averſe from every idea of accommodation. And the States General having at length come to a reſolution, notwithſtanding the oppoſition of that

great and leading province, to invite the mediation of Great Britain and Pruſſia—the States of Holland, inflamed with ſo unauthoriſed a proceeding, declared themſelves determined rather to ſtrike out their names from the Union of Utrecht, than to ſuffer ſuch a meaſure to receive the ſanction of the Republic.

The Prince of Orange having now removed his Court to Nimeguen, an ineffectual negotiation was nevertheleſs carried on during the winter of 1786-7, through the medium of the Count de Goertz and M. de Rayneval the French Envoy. Every thing on the breaking up of theſe conferences wore the face of war. The Prince encamped near the city of Utrecht oppoſite to the *cordon* formed by the troops of Holland. The States General, whoſe conſtitutional powers were unhappily too limited and feeble to interpoſe with efficacy, could do nothing more to avert the calamities which menaced the nation, than enforce by a reſolution that article of the Union which forbad the troops of the Republic from marching into any province without the leave of the States of that province firſt obtained.

From the commencement of the conteſt, the incapacity and intractability of the Prince of Orange had been very apparent. Head of the Houſe of Naſſau, he diſplayed neither the talents nor virtues which had for ages been ſuppoſed attached to that illuſtrious

illuſtrious name. The Princeſs, his conſort, was ſaid to poſſeſs a much larger ſhare of ſpirit as well as underſtanding. In the month of June (1787), for reaſons which have never perfectly tranſpired, her Royal Highneſs, then reſident at Nimeguen, adopted the bold and hazardous reſolution of proceeding in perſon to the Hague, where the States General were at that time aſſembled, accompanied only by the Baroneſs de Waſſanaer and a few domeſtics. As might previouſly be expected, ſhe was arreſted in her progreſs at about a league beyond Schoonhoven, and forced back to Nimeguen. This incident brought matters to a criſis. On the 10th of July a Memorial was addreſſed by the Pruſſian Monarch to the States of Holland, in which he affected to conſider the indignity offered to his ſiſter as a perſonal inſult to himſelf. To avenge this pretended affront, the Duke of Brunſwick, who commanded the Pruſſian forces in the contiguous Duchy of Cleves, entered Holland at the head of an army conſiſting of about twenty thouſand men on the 13th of September (1787). Notwithſtanding the previous probability of this invaſion, the conſternation of the Dutch nation was extreme, and the country ſeemed every-where unprepared for reſiſtance. Utrecht, beyond all other cities of the Union diſtinguiſhed for the violence of her democratic zeal, ſurrendered almoſt as ſoon as ſummoned. The march of the Pruſſian Ge-

neral bore the appearance of a triumphal proceſſion. While a futile reſolve to ſuſpend the office of Stadtholder paſſed the Senate of Amſterdam, Gorcum, Dordt, Schoonhoven and other towns in his route ſubmitted tamely to the conqueror. On the ſeventh day from the commencement of the invaſion, the Prince of Orange made his public entry into the Hague. Amſterdam only made a ſhew of reſiſtance: but on the 10th of October that proud capital, now cloſely inveſted, opened its gates to the victor. To the aſtoniſhment of the world, that Republic which maintained a conteſt of eighty years againſt the power of Spain, which contended for the empire of the ocean with Great Britain, and which repelled the attacks of Louis XIV. in the zenith of his glory, was over-run by the arms of Pruſſia in a ſingle month. Such and ſo dire are the effects which flow from civil diſcord and diſunion! In the whole of this tranſaction, Pruſſia acted in intimate and avowed concert with England; and while France was ſlowly aſſembling troops in the vicinity of Liege, and the Emperor was preſenting feeble remonſtrances at Berlin, the revolution projected by the Stadtholderian faction was carried into complete execution, and the Stadtholder triumphantly reinſtated in all his real and pretended prerogatives.

It is not to be imagined that the Court of Verſailles ſaw the termination of this great conteſt with frigid

frigid indifference; but the diſtracted ſtate of her own affairs, and the increaſing diſcontents and diſorders of the kingdom, in a manner compelled her reluctant acquieſcence. The projects of the new Miniſter of Finance, M. de Calonne, proved unſucceſsful and abortive. In the latter end of the year 1785, a loan of 3,330,000l. being the acknowledged *deficit* of the current year, was negotiated; which the Parliament of Paris, after repeated remonſtrances, at laſt regiſtered only in purſuance of the King's poſitive commands; at the ſame time accompanying it with a reſolution importing "that public œconomy was the only genuine ſource of revenue, and the only means of providing for the neceſſities of the State, and of reſtoring that credit which borrowing had reduced to the brink of ruin." The King, incenſed at their preſumption, ordered this reſolution to be eraſed from their records—declaring "that he would never conſent that the Parliament ſhould ſo far abuſe his confidence and clemency as to make themſelves the cenſors of his adminiſtration. He declared himſelf ſatisfied with his Comptroller-General, and determined on no account to ſuffer groundleſs apprehenſions to interfere with the execution of plans calculated for the good of the State and the welfare of the Nation."

The hoſtile diſpoſition of the Parliament, and the evident impoſſibility of obtaining their cordial concurrence

currence to the meaſures in contemplation, determined the Miniſter to adopt a plan more ſuited to the boldneſs and extent of his views.

In the month of Auguſt 1786, M. de Calonne preſented a Memorial to the King, repreſenting "the melioration of the finances to be eſſentially connected with public order; and averring that what the national benefit required could not be effected by partial operations, and that the reparation of the whole was neceſſary to prevent the ruin of the whole. Of conſequence, the project he had formed embraced all the parts of the monarchy, and was intended to bring them to a cloſer union. It would be an inexhauſtible ſource of happineſs for the people of France; it would ſet the Monarch forever at reſt reſpecting the ſituation of his finances; *it would raiſe his* POWER *higher than that of the moſt proſperous of his anceſtors*, and enrol his name with thoſe of the moſt virtuous and enlightened legiſlators. In fine, what induced him to conjure his Majeſty to adopt it was, that out of the circle of this reformation he could foreſee nothing but calamity and ruin."

This magnificent and wonder-working plan was no other than to convene by royal authority and appointment, after the example of antient times, an aſſembly of the moſt conſiderable and enlightened perſons in the kingdom, under the denomination of NOTABLES, by whoſe influence and under

under whose sanction "a reformation might," to use the words of M. de Calonne, "be effected of whatever was vicious in the Constitution of the State." The Minister accompanied this proposal with a specification of various details, indicating a vigorous and comprehensive mind penetrated with a clear conviction of the necessity of a radical reform in the State, so far at least as related to that detestable aggregate mass of extortion and oppression which assumed the lofty appellation of the National System of Finance. Amongst the new regulations recommended by M. de Calonne, were the equalization of the *vingtièmes* or territorial revenue—the abolition of the *corvée*—the establishment of an uniform *tariff* throughout all the provinces of the kingdom—the alleviation of the odious *gabelle*—the extinction of the feudal rights as vested in the Crown—the suppression or melioration of the forest laws—and the application of the royal demesne lands to the service of the public.

This Memorial was received by the King with approbation; and before the termination of the year summonses were issued accordingly for the meeting of the Assembly of NOTABLES at Versailles, on the 22d of February 1787. It consisted of one hundred and forty-four persons, amongst whom were seven Princes of the Blood, nine Dukes and Peers of France, eight Field Marechals, eight Counsellors of State, and eleven Bishops and Archbishops.

biſhops. The remaining Members were chiefly ſelected from the different Parliaments and Magiſtracies of the kingdom.

The Convention of NOTABLES was opened in great ſtate by the King in perſon, with a ſpeech from the Throne, in which he declared "that they had been choſen by him from the different orders of the State, to impart to them his deſigns, and to receive from them the obſervations of which they might think them ſuſceptible. This, ſaid the Monarch, has been the cuſtom of many of my predeceſſors, and particularly of the CHIEF of my FAMILY, whoſe name remains ſtill dear to every Frenchman, and whoſe example I ſhall always be proud to make the rule of my conduct. His Majeſty then in general terms ſtated the views by which he was actuated—*the* IMPROVEMENT *of the* REVENUE—the equalization of taxes—the liberation of commerce—and expreſſed the fulleſt confidence in the zeal with which they were animated for his ſervice." This was followed by a long and elaborate harangue from M. de Calonne, in which he accuſed his predeceſſor M. Necker of leaving at his diſmiſſion from office an arrear of ſix hundred and eighty-four millions of livres totally unprovided for. The difference ſubſiſting between the annual revenue and the annual expenditure he eſtimated at eighty millions. "It is impoſſible," ſaid this Miniſter, "to ſuffer the State

State to remain in the conſtant and imminent danger to which a deficiency ſuch as the preſent expoſes it—impoſſible to go on, year after year, applying palliatives and expedients, which, though they may retard the criſis for a time, are ſure to render it more fatal at laſt." The Miniſter proceeds to develop his plan for reſtoring energy and ſtability to the State, by a grand reform of its abuſes, of which he exhibits an intereſting and curious detail. In ſumming up the aggregate of this account, and in ſolving the grand queſtion, why theſe intolerable abuſes and oppreſſions have been tranſmitted from reign to reign, and from age to age, he thus with flowing eloquence expreſſes himſelf: "It was not in the boſom of ignorance and confuſion, whoſe veil over-ſhadowed the times of our firſt Kings—it was not when Kings, inſecure upon their thrones, were entirely occupied in repelling the continual uſurpations of over-grown ſubjects—it was not in the midſt of the diſorder and anarchy of the feudal ſyſtem, when a band of petty tyrants iſſuing from their caſtles committed the moſt atrocious depredations—it was not when the rage for cruſades, inflamed by the double enthuſiaſm of religion and glory, carried into the other hemiſphere the ſtrength, the gallantry, and the misfortunes of France—it was not when a prince ſurnamed Auguste recovered the principal diſmemberments of the kingdom, and augmented its power and ſplendor;

ſplendor; nor when the gloomy politics of one of his ſucceſſors, by giving extenſion to a municipal government, prepared the means of uniting in the hand of the Sovereign all the power of the public ſtrength; nor when the Monarch the moſt eager after glory and the braveſt of knights contended with a rival Sovereign for the renown they both acquired at the expence of their people—It was not in thoſe turbulent and inauſpicious times, when fanaticiſm, rending the boſom of the State, filled it with horror and calamity; nor when that good King ſo dear to Frenchmen conquered his kingdom at the point of his ſword, and was taken up in adjuſting the long diſorders and the diſaſtrous effects of the civil wars—It was not when all the energy of an able and formidable Miniſter was concentred in the double deſign of reſtraining the ambition of a power become formidable to Europe, and of ſecuring the tranquillity of France by eſtabliſhing the monarchical authority; neither was it under that brilliant reign, when the beneficent intentions of a great Monarch were too often thwarted by ruinous wars, when the State was impoveriſhed by victories, while the kingdom was depopulated by perſecution; where ſo much care was beſtowed upon giving every thing an air of grandeur, that the ſolid proſperity of the State was always neglected—In ſhort, it was not before the monarchy had extended its limits to the points

nature had ordained to bound them, before she had arrived at her maturity, and the calm both within and without was securely established by the wisdom and moderation of her Sovereign, that it was possible to indulge a thought of reforming the defects of the Constitution, and of endeavoring to render the general administration more uniform."

That the patriotic professions of the King and of the Minister, in regard to the general reform of abuses, were at this period not wholly insincere, may be reasonably inferred from their anxious desire to be relieved from those pecuniary embarrassments, which were by no milder or easier means to be surmounted.

The interests of the Crown and of the People, at this crisis, alike required that limits should be placed to the oppression of the PRIVILEGED ORDERS, who constituted in France as it were a nation within a nation. But every idea of fixing legal bounds to the prerogative of the Monarch was rejected with indignation. It was not to derive information from their wisdom, and much less to be controlled by their authority, that this Assembly had been convened. The obvious and sole intent of the Court was to carry its own preconcerted plans into effect, under the sanction of this phantom of a National Representation.

In order to preclude even the shadow of opposition, M. de Calonne had with such admirable adroitness

adroitneſs of artifice organized this Aſſembly, that forty-four ſuffrages ſhould to all efficient purpoſes conſtitute the majority of one hundred and forty-four. The Aſſembly was with this view divided into ſeven ſections or chambers, over each of which a Prince of the Blood preſided. Voting by ſections, the majority of four would of courſe be accounted as the majority of the whole, although, had the votes been individually taken, the majority might very poſſibly be converted into an inſignificant minority. Notwithſtanding theſe precautions, ſo difficult of reſtraint are the ſpirit of ambition and the love of power, that the NOTABLES ſoon diſplayed a very refractory diſpoſition. Numerous objections were ſtarted to the plan laid before them. To the new territorial impoſt they poſitively refuſed their concurrence, unleſs the accounts and eſtimates of the Government were ſubmitted to their inſpection. This was refuſed with diſdain; and the King cauſed it to be ſignified to them, "that he was determined to introduce the *impôt territorial*, and that it therefore became them to debate, not the principle of the meaſure, but the moſt equitable form it could aſſume." This only rendered the diſcontent of the Aſſembly violent and general. It was ſaid, that the Miniſter had convoked them merely to ſerve as a battery, from which to play off his artillery againſt the Parliaments, and oblige them to regiſter the plans

he

he adopted. The enemies of M. de Calonne ſeized with eagerneſs this favorable opportunity to effect his ruin. The Count de Vergennes, who had powerfully ſupported in the Cabinet the authority and credit of M. Necker, had expired a few days only before the meeting of the NOTABLES. The Mareſchal de Caſtries, Miniſter of the Marine, the Baron de Breteuil, Maſter of the Houſehold, and M. de Miromeſnil, Keeper of the Seals, all of the Queen's party, were active in the deſign, in which they were zealouſly aſſiſted by the numerous friends of M. Necker. In the midſt of their inveſtigations, and while M. de Calonne was apparently unſuſpicious of danger, the Aſſembly was adjourned from the 5th to the 12th of April for the Eaſter receſs: and on the 8th that Miniſter was diſmiſſed from his employments. Nevertheleſs, that the triumph of his enemies might not be complete, M. de Miromeſnil was at the ſame time, conformably to the weak and wavering policy of the Monarch, commanded to reſign the Seals. The public clamor and odium riſing high againſt M. de Calonne, whom it was now the faſhion to repreſent as the moſt extravagant and profligate of Miniſters, he was exiled by the King to his eſtate in Lorraine; and he ſoon afterwards thought it expedient to take refuge in foreign parts from the inveterate rage of his enemies.

M. de Calonne was ſucceeded, after a ſhort in-

terval, by M. Lomenie de Brienne, Archbiſhop of Toulouſe—a leading Member of the Aſſembly of Notables, and of great popularity in the kingdom at large, as an undaunted advocate and aſſertor of the principles of univerſal liberty. The ſacrifice of M. de Calonne produced no conceſſions in favor of the Court. The Aſſembly of Notables, in their ſubſequent ſitting, declared themſelves utterly incompetent either to ſuggeſt different taxes, or to adopt and ſanction thoſe which had been propoſed. The views of the Court being thus finally fruſtrated, the Aſſembly was diſſolved (May 25, 1787), with a cold acknowledgment from the Sovereign of the ſervices which they had rendered to the public; and the Archbiſhop of Toulouſe entered upon his office with the proſpect of encountering difficulties ſtill more inſuperable than thoſe which had proved too mighty to be overcome by the far ſuperior ability of his celebrated predeceſſor.

It is not wonderful that, things being thus circumſtanced, no vigorous meaſures were adopted by France to counteract the united interference of England and Pruſſia in the affairs of Holland. In the month of July (1787), the States of Holland preſented to the States General a propoſition for ſoliciting the mediation of the Court of Verſailles; ſoon after which, the French Ambaſſador preſented alſo a Memorial to the States General, declaring

declaring the King his maſter to be highly ſenſible of this mark of the confidence of the Republic, and ready to co-operate by every means in his power for the reſtoration of harmony and peace. So late as the month of September, France tardily profeſſed her intention of aſſiſting the Dutch, in caſe they were attacked by any foreign power. This only animated the Court of London to act with the greater ſpirit and deciſion, and vigorous naval preparations were made to ſupport the King of Pruſſia, in oppoſition to the menacing declarations of France. But the object of the Pruſſian expedition being accompliſhed in a much ſhorter ſpace of time than could have been previouſly imagined, the Court of Verſailles found itſelf, probably not without a ſecret ſatisfaction, diſengaged from all obligations. The Duke of Dorſet, Ambaſſador at Paris, in conſequence of the events which had taken place, preſented (October 27th) a Memorial to the King of France, ſignifying, that "no ſubject of diſcuſſion, much leſs of conteſt, now remaining between the two Courts, he was authoriſed to aſk, whether it was the intention of his Moſt Chriſtian Majeſty to carry into effect the notification, made by his Moſt Chriſtian Majeſty's Plenipotentiary, which, by announcing that ſuccors would be given to Holland, had occaſioned the naval armaments on the part of his Britannic Majeſty, which armaments have been reciprocal.

If the Court of Verſailles is diſpoſed to explain herſelf ſatisfactorily on this ſubject, the Ambaſſador propoſes, that all warlike preparations ſhould be diſcontinued, and that the navies of the two nations ſhould be again placed on the footing of the peace eſtabliſhment, as it ſtood on the 1ſt of January of the preſent year." To this Memorial the Count de Montmorin, the new Miniſter for Foreign Affairs in France, replied on the very ſame day, in a ſtyle of exemplary forbearance and moderation, " that the intention of his Majeſty not being, *and never having been*, to interfere by force in the affairs of Holland, the communication made to the Court of London, on the 16th of laſt month, having had no other object than to announce to that Court an intention, the motives of which no longer exiſt, eſpecially ſince the King of Pruſſia has imparted his reſolution; his Majeſty makes no ſcruple to declare, that he will not give any effect to the declaration above mentioned; and agrees with pleaſure to the propoſal of mutually diſarming, made on the part of his Britannic Majeſty."

Thus happily and honorably for England did this important buſineſs terminate. Foreign powers were aſtoniſhed to ſee that country, which had a few years ſince been apparently reduced to the verge of ruin under an Adminiſtration pre-eminently odious and contemptible, re-aſſuming her rank

rank among the nations of Europe, and attaining to a visible superiority over that haughty and ambitious rival, whose recent success was now seen to be dearly purchased by her consequent alarming and inextricable embarrassments.

The Parliament of Great Britain assembled on the 27th of Nov. 1787. The King remarked, "that at the close of the last session he had informed them of the concern with which he observed the disputes unhappily subsisting in the republic of the United Provinces. Their situation soon afterwards became more critical and alarming. The King of Prussia having demanded satisfaction for the insult offered to the Princess of Orange, his sister, the party which had USURPED the Government applied to the Most Christian King for assistance; and that Prince having notified to his Majesty his intention of granting their request, the King did not hesitate to declare that he could not remain a quiet spectator, and gave immediate orders for augmenting his forces both by sea and land; and in the course of this transaction he had concluded a subsidiary treaty with the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel. In the mean time the rapid success of the Duke of Brunswick enabled the Provinces to deliver themselves from the OPPRESSION under which they labored; and all subjects of contest being thus removed, an amicable explanation had taken place between the Courts of London and Versailles."

This was the language rather of a zealous partiſan of the Houſe of Orange, than of a great Monarch, who, by a dignified and ſeaſonable interpoſition, had reſcued a country from ruin. It is inconceivable how the exiſting government of Holland could with any color of juſtice be ſtigmatized as an *uſurpation*; for by the conſtitution of that country the Prince of Orange as Stadtholder was not a Sovereign, but a ſubject poſſeſſing no ſhare of the legiſlative power; and though by the *formula* of 1747 the office was declared hereditary, it was not therefore irrevocable any more than the hereditary offices of Earl Marſhal or Great Chamberlain under the Engliſh Conſtitution. And the oppreſſions alluded to in the ſpeech were plainly nothing elſe than the uſual ſeverities inflicted upon thoſe who preſumed to reſiſt the mandates of the ſupreme government. But in the recent meaſures adopted by the Engliſh Court there were, notwithſtanding this flagrant impropriety of language, ſo much energy, and at the ſame time ſo much practical wiſdom, that leſſer objections were abſorbed and loſt in the general merit of the tranſaction. To the grand propoſition—"that it is contrary to the rights of nations, and a violation of the fundamental principles of political juſtice, for one nation to interfere in the internal concerns of another"—it muſt ſuffice to reply, that however incontrovertible this maxim may be deemed as a general

neral truth, an interference attended with consequences thus eminently beneficial must be allowed, like other necessary exceptions from general rules, to deserve not pardon merely, but praise.

The addresses in answer to the speech were voted with great unanimity in both Houses; and the Minister received from the Leaders of Opposition, no less than his own partisans, the most liberal commendations for his spirited and judicious conduct. The subsidy to Hesse, by which twelve thousand men were at a vast expence retained for a term of years in the service of Britain, passed without a dissentient vote; and in a short time treaties of amity and alliance were concluded between the Courts of London, Berlin, and the Hague, by which the two former guarantied the Stadtholderate in perpetuity to the Serene House of Orange, as an essential part of the Constitution of the United Provinces.

By the treaty between the Kings of Great Britain and Prussia, each of the high contracting powers engages, in case of attack, to furnish the other with a succor of sixteen thousand infantry and four thousand cavalry, or an equivalent in money, within the term of two months from the date of the requisition. Thus was Britain once again fatally entangled in the intricate and inextricable toils of continental engagements.

The army establishment, which had been re-

duced from seventy to sixty-four regiments at the termination of the war, was now at the motion of the Minister raised to the customary complement, notwithstanding the vigorous opposition of Mr. Fox, under whose administration the reduction had taken place, and who justly boasted that he was the first Minister since the Revolution who had been accused of establishing too small a standing army in time of peace. A very great naval promotion had also taken place, in the contemplation of a war with France; in which it was remarkable that sixteen captains had been selected for flags, while a much greater number of officers, several of whom were men of the most distinguished gallantry and merit, had been unaccountably passed over in silence and neglect.

In consequence of this injurious partiality a motion was made in the House of Commons, "that the House should resolve itself into a Committee to enquire into the conduct of the Admiralty on the business of the late promotion." This motion was destined to encounter the vehement opposition of Mr. Pitt, who declared, "that if this resolution passed, the next thing he presumed would be to resolve that the Members of that House were better judges of naval concerns than professional men at the head of the marine department." To this Mr. Fox justly replied, that this argument, if admitted in its full extent, would effect the total annihilation

annihilation of the conſtitutional powers of parliamentary control. If a complaint were lodged againſt the conduct of a Judge, it might be ſaid, "What do you know of the law? Leave it to the Courts below"—and thus of every other department in Army, Church, and State. Upon a diviſion the motion was negatived in a Houſe of near three hundred Members by a majority of ſeventeen voices only. And the Firſt Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Howe, became upon this occaſion the ſubject of very ſevere and general cenſure and reproach. His Lordſhip ſoon afterwards reſigned his office, and was ſucceeded by the Earl of Chatham.

Nearly at the ſame time the Earl of Mansfield reſigned the Chief Juſticeſhip of England, which he had held with high and undiminiſhed reputation for the long period of thirty-two years, to the Attorney General, Sir Lloyd Kenyon, created Lord Kenyon.

Perpetual diſputes having ariſen, as had been foreſeen and foretold, between the two Boards of Direction and Control, eſtabliſhed by Mr. Pitt's India Regulation Bill, the Miniſter thought proper in the courſe of the ſeſſion to bring in his famous DECLARATORY ACT, by which various new and important powers were conferred on the Board of Control, under pretect of explaining and determining the ſenſe of the former bill. This meaſure met with a moſt animated and formidable oppoſition,

oppoſition. Colonel Barré proteſted that he had from the firſt diſcerned the traces of a ſyſtem of Indian patronage, of which he believed the bill under diſcuſſion to be a great advance to the final completion; and if it ſhould be ſuffered to paſs, a fatal ſtab would be given to the Conſtitution.

Mr. Sheridan called upon the Houſe to compare the powers of Mr. Fox's Commiſſioners with thoſe which were now aſſerted to belong to the Board of Control. Lord Fitzwilliam could not ſend out a diſpatch; he could neither declare war, nor make peace, in India; he could neither collect the revenues of the Company, nor apply them to the purpoſes he ſhould think proper, without having firſt the pleaſure of the King ſignified to him through the medium of the Secretary of State. The Board of Control could do all this. The Miniſter had now violated that compact with the Company on which he originally and profeſſedly ſtood—how then could he eſcape the ignominy of deliberately breaking his moſt ſolemn engagements?

Mr. Burke deſired to be informed by Adminiſtration, "whether, when they brought in the act of 1784, and complained that Mr. Fox's bill took too much, they had honeſtly ſtated that all they meant to take was the military power, the political direction, the mangement of the revenue, and as much as they could get of the commerce? The queſtion

queſtion then to have put to the Houſe would have been, in whoſe hands they were willing this power ſhould be entruſted? In the hands of ſeven of the moſt reſpectable men in the kingdom, of parliamentary appointment, or with the ſhreds and remnants of office? The public had been at that time infatuated, hurried on to madneſs. The mob of 1784 had deſtroyed the Houſe of Commons, and in ſo doing they had deſtroyed the palladium of their privileges; but he now indulged the hope of ſeeing the Houſe riſe like a phœnix regenerated from its aſhes." The queſtion of commitment was carried by a majority of fifty-ſeven voices only, and on being carried into the Houſe of Lords it experienced a ſecond oppoſition ſcarcely leſs violent than the firſt. It paſſed at length, accompanied with a proteſt ſigned by ſixteen Peers, in which the Declaratory Bill was reprobated as friendly to corrupt intrigue and cabal—hoſtile to all good government—and abhorrent to the principles of our Conſtitution. The patronage of the Company was ſaid to be enjoyed by the Commiſſioners in the worſt of all poſſible forms, and without that reſponſibility which was the natural ſecurity againſt malverſation and abuſe. In ſome degree to palliate this odious meaſure, by which the Company were for ever deprived of all efficient authority in India, they were empowered by a ſubſequent bill to borrow for the relief of their financial embarraſſments the ſum of 1,200,000l.

1,200,000l. for which, notwithſtanding the *flouriſhing condition* of their affairs, they ſtood in immediate and urgent neceſſity.

In the early part of the ſeſſion the great India delinquent Mr. Haſtings had delivered in his anſwer to the impeachment of the Commons, who immediately proceeded to the appointment of a Committee of Managers, to make good the ſame. When Mr. Francis had been in the laſt ſeſſion propoſed as one of the Committee to prepare the articles, he had been objected to on the ground of the perſonal animoſity known to ſubſiſt between him and Mr. Haſtings, and which had been unfortunately productive of an encounter, wherein the life of Mr. Francis had been imminently endangered.

Mr. Fox on the preſent occaſion again moved the Houſe that the name of Mr. Francis be added to the liſt of Managers. He urged, "that the Houſe were not ſitting as judges of Mr. Haſtings—not even in the capacity of grand jurors; the bill had been found, and they were now become his accuſers and proſecutors. Did it diſqualify a man from acting as an accuſer, that he was animated with an honeſt indignation againſt the crimes and the criminal whom he attempted to bring to juſtice? The enmity which Mr. Francis cheriſhed againſt Mr. Haſtings was not a private but a public enmity, founded on a juſt ſenſe of the abuſes

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he had committed, and the truſt he had perverted. Mr. Francis had with infinite application and ability developed, by means of his local and perſonal knowledge, the whole myſtery of Indian corruption; he had enforced it on the reluctant conviction of that Houſe. Would the Houſe, now they had adopted the accuſation, and made it their own, prevent its author from ſupporting it at the bar of the Houſe of Lords, where only he could ſupport it with effect?"

Mr. Francis himſelf with great dignity and animation entered into a general vindication of his character and conduct. "Upon his return from India he had been called upon, he ſaid, to give evidence before a Committee of the Houſe of Commons. Could he without treachery to the public refuſe every information in his power? To act in the capacity of a whiſpering adviſer, or an obſcure and covert witneſs, he diſdained. In his own opinion, and in that of men of the higheſt reputation whom he had conſulted, he acted far more honorably in declaring himſelf the reſponſible accuſer of Mr. Haſtings—in avowing his principles, and abiding by their conſequences. He was happy to find that the objection againſt him implied no imputation upon his character, no ſuſpicion upon his actions. He truſted that no one would think it poſſible that he meant to ſolicit the Houſe to alter their reſolution. He owed, indeed, every aſſiſtance

in his power to carry into effect the task now undertaken. Exclusively of that consideration, what could he desire better than to be excused from any farther concern in this toilsome, invidious, and most unthankful office?"

Mr. Pitt contented himself with saying, "that the question was in his opinion a question of feeling, and not of argument; and he could not reconcile to his ideas of propriety or delicacy the appointment of a Member as the Representative of the House in this business, who was distinguished from all others by the personal contest in which he had been engaged with the accused." This drew down the indignation of Mr. Burke. "Was it fit or becoming, he asked, for a legislator, in a great and important question, to say that his feelings compelled him to abandon his arguments?—that his delicacy was offended by rational investigation? What was delicacy, but at best a superadded flower to virtue—an ornament, the presence or absence of which was alike indifferent to the substance? Delicacy and feeling might be proper terms to express the sensations excited by the exertions of an opera singer, but they were an insult to the solemnity and magnitude of parliamentary deliberation." At length the House divided on the motion of Mr. Fox, ayes 62, noes 122.

This decision gave extreme offence to the Committee of Managers, who expressed, in a letter to Mr.

Mr. Francis, the high ſenſe they entertained of his merits and ſervices. "They had peruſed," they ſaid, "with great attention, the Records of the Company, and they had found there, on the part of Mr. Francis, wiſe and ſteady principles of government, an exact obedience to the authority placed over him, an inflexible integrity in himſelf, and a firm reſiſtance to all corrupt practices in others; crowned by that uniform benevolent attention to the rights, properties, and welfare of the natives, which had been the leading object in his appointment. Such a conduct, ſo tried, acknowledged, and recorded, demanded their fulleſt confidence; and ſuch were the qualities that had excited their wiſh for his aſſiſtance." Thus nobly and unequivocally was the character of this diſtinguiſhed politician, patriot, and friend to mankind, vindicated in the view of preſent and of future times.

Next in dignity, and next in the general eſtimation in delinquency, to Mr. Haſtings, was Sir Elijah Impey, Chief Juſtice of the Supreme Court eſtabliſhed by the Regulating Act of 1773; againſt whom it was now determined to inſtitute a ſimilar proceſs. Six articles of impeachment were accordingly in the early part of the ſeſſion exhibited to the Houſe by Sir Gilbert Elliot; of which the conduct of the Chief Juſtice in the memorable buſineſs of Nund-comar conſtituted the firſt. His deciſions in the Patna and Coſſijura cauſes, his acceptance

ceptance of an employment, contrary to his OATH, in the native court ſtyled the Sudder Dewannee Adaulet, to be held during the pleaſure of the Governor and Council, and his proceedings in concert with the Governor reſpecting the affairs of Benares and Oude, furniſhed ample materials for the remaining charges. On the 4th of February, 1788, Sir Elijah was permitted to make his defence at the bar of the Houſe; which he performed at great length, and with great ability—confining himſelf however entirely to the charge relating to Nund-comar. For he remarked, with the artfulneſs of practiſed and technical ſubtilty, "that his mind had been ſo much deranged by the magnitude of that charge, that he found it impoſſible to exert himſelf in reply to the other accuſations till the queſtion of Nund-comar was decided. He could not bear to live under the imputation of MURDER; but if he were acquitted of *that*, he ſhould conſider all the other charges as frivolous and unimportant." Being requeſted to leave the minutes of his defence, as Mr. Haſtings had before done, upon the table, the Chief Juſtice declared it to be impoſſible—having *unfortunately* ſpoken extempore.

On the 28th of April (1788), Sir Gilbert Elliot entered upon his ſummary of the charge. He enlarged upon the "abſurdity of enforcing a law founded upon the local cuſtoms of one country

try againſt the natives of another. To extend by a conſtructive interpretation the Engliſh law againſt forgery, unknown on the other ſide the Tweed, to India, was no leſs prepoſterous than to try the Great Mogul and the Viziers of his Court upon the Engliſh ſtatute of Bigamy. He ſtated in the ſtrongeſt terms the expediency and equity of at leaſt granting a reſpite of the ſentence, ſince conviction had been obtained by evidence the moſt ſuſpicious, at a time when Nund-comar was in the act of bringing forward an accuſation againſt the Governor General, and when it was evident that the execution of the ſentence could not take place without exciting horror and diſmay throughout Hindoſtan. He affirmed, that the blood of the MURDERED RAJAH was upon their heads, and ſtill crying for vengeance on the man who had thus ſtained and crimſoned the ſpotleſs ermine of juſtice." The defence of Sir Elijah Impey had, however, engaged and pre-occupied the minds of the Houſe. And it muſt be confeſſed, that the Chief Juſtice had ſo ſkilfully entrenched himſelf behind the impregnable ramparts of the law—the letter of which, admitting the extenſion of the ſyſtem of Engliſh juriſprudence to India, he in the whole of this tranſaction carefully avoided overſtepping—that it was difficult to pronounce him in a legal ſenſe guilty, however flagitious his conduct might appear when brought to the teſt of

free and rational inveſtigation. The lawyers in the Houſe ſeemed to conſider it as a common cauſe, and exerted themſelves with peculiar ardor in his behalf; and Mr. Pitt declaring himſelf convinced of the innocence of the accuſed, the motion of Sir Gilbert Elliot was on the diviſion negatived by a majority of 73 to 65 voices. Such was the effect of this diſcouraging circumſtance, that the farther conſideration of the Impeachment was adjourned over the ſeſſion, and it has never yet been reſumed. It ſeems extraordinary, that the acceptance of an appointment contrary to his oath of office, under the Governor and Council, by the Chief Juſtice, which was the immediate ground of his recall, was not made the leading article of the Impeachment, as upon this head all the ingenuity of the profeſſion, excellent and admirable as it is, could have afforded no colorable defence.

The trial of Mr. Haſtings commenced on the 15th of February (1788); Weſtminſter Hall being fitted up for the purpoſe with great magnificence. Mr. Burke was no leſs than four ſucceſſive days in making his preliminary ſpeech, which was filled with vehement invective, with much rhetorical exaggeration, and with matter wholly extraneous to the ſubject of the Impeachment. Men of plain ſenſe, whoſe object was TRUTH, and who deſired only a clear and ſimple

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ſummary of facts, ſighed over theſe eccentricities and follies; and augured ill of the final ſucceſs of the Impeachment from ſo injudicious an outſet. If approbation, however, was wanting, the place was amply ſupplied by admiration; and the ſpeech was extolled by the paraſitical flatterers of Mr. Burke, as a more than Ciceronian effort of eloquence.

On the 22d of February the Benares charge was opened by Mr. Fox; and it was concluded on the 25th by Mr. Grey, Member for the county of Northumberland, whoſe talents had attracted at a very early period of life, in an eminent degree, the attention of the Houſe, of which he was ſoon perceived deſtined to be one of the chief and moſt diſtinguiſhed ornaments.

On the 15th of April the charge relative to the Begums of Oude was brought forward in a very able manner by Mr. Adam; and the evidence on this charge was ſummed up by Mr. Sheridan, in a ſpeech which laſted five days, and of which the more vigorous compreſſion only was wanting to the perfection of eloquence.

The laſt buſineſs of importance which engaged the attention of Parliament, was a bill brought into the Houſe by Sir William Dolben, Member for the Univerſity of Oxford, a man of the higheſt integrity and reſpectability, to regulate the tranſportation of Slaves from the Coaſt of Africa to the

Weſt Indies. At the beginning of the year, a multitude of petitions had been preſented from the different towns, cities, and counties of the kingdom, imploring in earneſt and affecting terms the abolition of that ſuperlatively nefarious and deteſtable traffic. A motion on the ſubject of theſe petitions was expected to be made by Mr. Wilberforce, Member for Yorkſhire; but in conſequence of the long-protracted and unfortunate indiſpoſition of that gentleman, Mr. Pitt on the 9th of May moved a reſolution, importing that the Houſe would early in the next ſeſſion proceed to take into conſideration the ſtate of the Slave Trade. The bill of Sir William Dolben, which was intended merely to eſtabliſh a certain reaſonable proportion between the number of ſlaves and the tonnage of the ſhips, was violently and obſtinately oppoſed by petitions from the Merchants of London and Liverpool concerned in the African trade. Counſel being therefore engaged, and witneſſes examined, it appeared in evidence at the bar of the Houſe, that five feet ſix inches in length, and ſixteen inches in breadth, was the average ſpace allotted to each ſlave. The lower deck of the veſſel was entirely covered with bodies. The ſpace between the floor of that deck and the roof above, in height about five feet eight inches, was divided by a platform, alſo covered with human bodies. The ſlaves were chained two and two by their hands and feet, and

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by means of ring-bolts fastened to the deck. In that sultry climate, their allowance was a pint of water each, *per diem*; and they were usually fed twice a day with yams and horse-beans. After meals they were compelled by the whip to jump in their irons, which by the slave-dealers was called dancing. They had not, as was emphatically stated, when stowed together, so much room as a man in his *coffin*, either in length or breadth. They drew their breath with laborious and anxious efforts, and many died of mere suffocation. The customary mortality of the voyage exceeded seventeen times the usual estimate of human life. A slave ship, when full fraught with this cargo of wretchedness and abomination, exhibited at once the extremes of human depravity and human misery.

Mr. Pitt, who on various occasions has dropped the statesman to assume the nobler character of the philanthropist, declared with indignant eloquence, "that if, as had been asserted by the Members for Liverpool, the trade could not be carried on in any other manner, he would retract what he had said on a former day, and, waving every farther discussion, give his instant vote for the annihilation of a traffic thus shocking to humanity. He trusted that the House, being now in possession of such evidence as was never before exhibited, would endeavor to extricate themselves from the guilt and

remorſe which every man ought to feel for having ſo long over-looked ſuch cruelty and oppreſſion." The bill was carried up June 18th to the Houſe of Lords, where it was fated to encounter the determined oppoſition of Lord Thurlow. His Lordſhip ſaid, that the bill was full of inconſiſtency and nonſenſe. The French had lately offered premiums to encourage the African trade, and the natural preſumption was, that we ought to do the ſame. This meaſure appeared to him very like a breach of parliamentary faith. As to himſelf, he ſcrupled not to ſay, " that if the fit of philanthropy which had ſlept ſo many years had been ſuffered to ſleep one ſummer longer, it would have appeared to him more wiſe than to take up the ſubject in this diſjointed manner." The Duke of Chandos ventured to predict a general inſurrection of the Negroes in the Weſt Indies in conſequence of the agitation of the preſent queſtion. And Lord Sydney, who had once ranked amongſt the Friends of Liberty, expreſſed in warm terms his admiration of the ſyſtem of the Slave Laws eſtabliſhed in Jamaica, and ſaw no room for any improvement. The bill was defended by the Duke of Richmond and Marquis Townſhend in a manner which did honor to their underſtanding and feelings: and it finally paſſed by a conſiderable majority.

The King put an end to the ſeſſion July 11,

1788, by a ſpeech from the throne, in which he complimented the two Houſes on their attention and liberality. "His faithful ſubjects had every reaſon, as he affirmed, to expect the continuance of the bleſſings of peace; and the engagements which he had recently formed with the King of Pruſſia and the States General of the United Provinces, would, he truſted, promote the ſecurity and welfare of his own dominions, and contribute to the general tranquillity of Europe."

Soon after the receſs of Parliament, the King, who had been for ſome time rather indiſpoſed, was adviſed by his phyſicians to try the mineral waters of Cheltenham, which he was believed to drink in too profuſe a quantity. His health appeared nevertheleſs, during his reſidence there, greatly eſtabliſhed; and he amuſed himſelf and gratified his people by various excurſions in the vicinity of that place, diſplaying on theſe occaſions much condeſcenſion and affability, and being every where received with loud acclamations.

On his return to Windſor, late in the ſummer, his illneſs returned with new and alarming ſymptoms. By the end of October, it could no longer be concealed that the malady of the King was of a nature peculiarly afflictive and dreadful. A mental derangement had taken place, which rendered him totally incapable of public buſineſs.

The Parliament had been prorogued to the 20th

of November; a few days previous to which, a circular letter was iſſued by the Miniſters, in which the impracticability of a farther prorogation was ſignified, and the attendance of the Members earneſtly requeſted. Parliament being accordingly aſſembled, the ſtate of the King's health was formally notified to the Houſe of Peers by the Lord Chancellor, and to the Commons by Mr. Pitt: and as the Seſſion of Parliament could not be opened in the regular mode, an adjournment of fourteen days was recommended; at the end of which term, if the King's illneſs ſhould unhappily continue, it would be incumbent upon them to enter into the immediate conſideration of the ſtate of public affairs. Upon the re-aſſembling of Parliament, December the 4th, a Report of the Board of Privy Council was preſented to the two Houſes, containing an examination of the Royal Phyſicians; and it was properly ſuggeſted, that, conſidering the extreme delicacy of the ſubject, and the dignity of the perſon concerned, Parliament would do well to reſt ſatisfied without any more direct and expreſs information, eſpecially as the examinations of Council had been taken upon oath, which the Houſe of Commons had no power to adminiſter.

The ſituation of affairs was at this period ſingularly critical. The Prince of Wales, into whoſe hands the government of the country was ſoon likely

likely to fall, retained a deep reſentment againſt the preſent Miniſters for their recent conduct reſpecting him, and took no pains to conceal his decided predilection for the perſon and politics of Mr. Fox. This diſtinguiſhed leader, on the earlieſt intelligence of the King's indiſpoſition, had returned from a ſummer excurſion to the Continent with incredible expedition; and in contemplation of an approaching change, a new arrangement of Adminiſtration was already believed to be formed, conſiſting of the principal Members of the former Coalition Miniſtry, Lord North only excepted, and of which the Duke of Portland was to be once more the oſtenſible head. The policy of Oppoſition ſeemed evidently repugnant to every idea of unneceſſary delay. Yet doubts were unaccountably ſtarted by Mr. Fox, Mr. Burke, and others of the ſame party, whether Parliament could in this momentous caſe diſpenſe with that ſort of evidence on which they had been accuſtomed to proceed. The validity of the objection was very faintly conteſted, and a Committee of twenty-one perſons in each Houſe, after no long debate, appointed to examine and report the ſentiments of the Royal Phyſicians. The Report of the Committee was laid upon the table of the Houſe of Commons on the 10th of December; when a motion was made by Mr. Pitt, for the appointment of another Committee to inſpect the Journals for precedents

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of such proceedings as had been adopted in former instances, when the sovereign authority was suspended by sickness, infirmity, or any other cause.

Mr. Fox, sensible perhaps of his former error, now opposed with energy the present motion, as calculated only for delay. With respect to precedents, there were, he said, notoriously none which applied to the present instance; and he affirmed, that all which was requisite to their ultimate decision, had been obtained by the Report now lying upon their table. By that Report they had ascertained the incapacity of the Sovereign. And he advanced as a proposition deducible from the principles of the Constitution, and the analogy of the law of hereditary succession, that whenever the Sovereign was incapable of exercising the functions of his high office, the Heir Apparent, if of full age and capacity, had as indisputable a claim to the exercise of the executive authority, in the name and on the behalf of the Sovereign, during his incapacity, as in the case of his natural demise."

Mr. Pitt, eager to seize any occasion of postponing, by the intervention of extraneous questions, the ultimate decision, immediately rose with much apparent warmth, and declared, "that the assertion which had been made by Mr. Fox was little short of TREASON against the CONSTITUTION. And he pledged himself to prove, that the Heir Apparent,

rent, in the inſtances in queſtion, had no more right to the exerciſe of the executive power than ANY OTHER PERSON; and that it belonged entirely to the two remaining branches of the Legiſlature, to make ſuch a proviſion for ſupplying the temporary deficiency as they might think proper." Thus was this famous queſtion at iſſue between theſe two great political rivals; in which it was remarkable, that Mr. Fox, the great advocate of the rights of the people, became the defender of prerogative; and Mr. Pitt, who had been loudly accuſed of deſerting the principles of liberty, appeared in the advantageous light of their intrepid and zealous aſſertor. All thoſe popular arguments and primary axioms of Government, on which the friends of freedom ſo juſtly delight to dwell, were upon this occaſion urged by Mr. Pitt with the greateſt ſucceſs. "When the regular exerciſe of the powers of government was from any cauſe ſuſpended, to whom could the right of providing a remedy for the exiſting defect devolve, but to the people, from whom all the powers of government originated? To aſſert an inherent right in the Prince of Wales to aſſume the government, was virtually to revive thoſe exploded ideas of the divine and indefeaſible authority of Princes, which had ſo juſtly ſunk into contempt and almoſt into oblivion. Kings and Princes derive their power from the people; and to the people alone, through the

the organ of their repreſentatives, did it appertain to decide in caſes for which the Conſtitution had made no ſpecific or poſitive proviſion." In vain was every effort attempted to ſtem the tide of popular opinion, which ran with no leſs violence at this criſis in favor of Mr. Pitt, than at the commencement of his miniſterial career. In vain was it urged, that the primary principles of government were not the ſubjects of the preſent controverſy. The queſtion was ſimply, to determine what the analogy of the Conſtitution required in a caſe wherein no recourſe could be had to authoritative precedents or to legal deciſions. The conſtitutional authority of Parliament to provide for the ſafety of the nation, in an exigency like the preſent, muſt be univerſally acknowledged. But the doubt was, whether, in the appointment of a Regent, they were to exerciſe a judicial or an elective authority. If the former, the buſineſs was at an end; for they muſt neceſſarily *adjudge* the Regency to the Prince. But if they were to exerciſe an arbitrary elective power, Mr. Pitt might make himſelf the competitor of the Prince of Wales. Upon the Regent of their ELECTION they would undoubtedly, as was the practice in all elective governments, impoſe ſuch limitations as they thought proper. Thus the balance of the Conſtitution would be deſtroyed, the Executive Power would become wholly dependent upon the Legiſlative,

lative, and the genius of the Government would be radically and eſſentially changed. The ſovereign authority is not a property, but an office. To execute that office, certain powers are neceſſary; and whoever exerciſes it, and under whatever name he acts, ought to be poſſeſſed of thoſe neceſſary powers; and no man under any title or denomination ought to be inveſted with more than are neceſſary. If hereditary monarchy be eſtabliſhed as a ſalutary proviſion to fruſtrate the machinations of faction, the ſame rule applies to a Regent, who ought to be inveſted with all the authority requiſite to preſerve the tranquillity and promote the welfare of the State." Mr. Fox not chooſing to take the ſenſe of the Houſe, Mr. Pitt's motion for precedents was carried without a diviſion.

A ſimilar motion was the next day made by Lord Camden in the Houſe of Peers, and the doctrine of Mr. Fox reprobated by his Lordſhip with great ſeverity. It was on the other hand defended with eloquence and ability by Lord Loughborough, and Lord Stormont, who concluded his ſpeech with recommending an immediate Addreſs to the Prince of Wales, entreating him to aſſume the exerciſe of the Royal Authority. The diſcuſſion of the abſtract queſtion of right being perceived to afford a great and unexpected advantage to the Miniſtry, the Duke of York, ſoon after this debate,

debate, in the name of the Prince, expreſſed his wiſhes, "that the queſtion might be waved. No claim of right, his Highneſs ſaid, had been advanced by the Prince of Wales; and he was confident that his brother too well underſtood the ſacred principles which ſeated the Houſe of Brunſwick upon the throne, ever to aſſume or exerciſe any power, be his claim what it might, that was not derived from the will of the people expreſſed by their Repreſentatives."

Lord Thurlow, who had at firſt conſented to take a part in the new Adminiſtration, in the arrangement of which the poſt of Lord Preſident had been aſſigned to him, now varying the courſe of his policy, ſpoke with great energy of his "ſentiments of affection towards the King. Nothing could be more diſgraceful than to deſert the Sovereign in his diſtreſſed and helpleſs ſituation. His own debt of gratitude was ample, and when he forgot his King might GOD forget him." Theſe expreſſions were rumored to be the reſult of certain intimations which his Lordſhip had recently received of the happy and not very diſtant proſpect of the King's recovery. This was however as yet a matter of anxious and precarious *ſpeculation.*

In the Committee on the State of the Nation, December 16, Mr. Pitt moved two Declaratory Reſolutions, importing, 1. The interruption of the

the Royal Authority; and 2. That it was the duty of the two Houſes of Parliament to *provide the means* of ſupplying the defect. A vehement debate enſued; in the courſe of which Mr. Fox declared the principles of the Miniſter to be, that the Monarchy was indeed hereditary, but that the Executive Power ought to be elective. The legal metaphyſics that thus diſtinguiſhed between the Crown and its functions were to him unintelligible. The inveſtigators ſhould be ſchoolmen, and not ſtateſmen, if a queſtion that ſo deeply involved the exiſtence of the Conſtitution were to be thus diſcuſſed. Where, ſaid he, is that famous DICTUM to be found, by which the Crown is guarded with ſuch inviolable ſanctity, while its *powers* are left to the mercy of every aſſailant? The Reſolution was at length carried, on a diviſion, by 268 againſt 204 voices. This great point being gained, the Miniſtry proceeded without heſitation or delay to convert it to their own pre-concerted purpoſes.

On the 23d of December a third Reſolution paſſed, empowering the Chancellor of Great Britain to affix the Great Seal to ſuch Bill of Limitations as might be neceſſary to reſtrict the power of the future Regent. This mode of procedure was oppoſed with great animation by Lord North. "A perſon," ſaid his Lordſhip, "is to be ſet up without power or diſcretion; and this pageant, this fictitious being, is to give the force of a law to

to the decisions of the two Houses. Was it ever before heard of, that there could be a power of giving assent without the power of refusing that assent? Would any man seriously maintain that the Third Estate thus conjured up is really distinct from the other two?" It was styled, in the heat and passion of debate, an "insulting fraud," a "mockery of legislation," a "legal forgery." And an amendment was finally moved by Mr. Dempster, "That the Prince of Wales be requested to take upon himself the administration of the Government during the Royal incapacity." On the division the amendment was negatived by 251 to 178 voices.

The Resolutions which had passed the Commons being communicated for the concurrence of the Lords, a similar amendment to that of Mr. Dempster was moved by Lord Rawdon; when, after a violent debate, the Resolutions were confirmed, on a division of 66 to 99 Peers.

On the 2d of January 1789, to complete the singularity and perplexity of the business, died Mr. Cornwall, Speaker of the House of Commons; and on the 5th the vacant Chair was filled by Mr. Grenville, brother to Lord Temple—the irregularity of his entering upon the duties of his office without the sanction of the Royal approbation being scarcely noticed, amid the pressure of affairs so much more important. The Bill of Limitations,

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when ready to be introduced into the Houſe, was obſtructed by an unſeaſonable motion of Mr. Loveden, that the Phyſicians be re-examined on the ſubject of the King's illneſs, and the probability of recovery. This motion was the reſult of various reports reſpecting the diſagreement of opinion amongſt the Phyſicians themſelves,—reports ſufficiently corroborated by the ſubſequent examination, which left the Houſe as much in the dark as ever as to the event; anſwering no other purpoſe than to create an additional delay, of which the Miniſter well knew the value and the advantage. A letter was at length written to the Prince of Wales by Mr. Pitt, informing his Royal Highneſs of the plan meant to be purſued:—that the care of the King's perſon, and the diſpoſition of the Royal houſehold, ſhould be committed to the Queen, who would by this means be veſted with the patronage of four hundred places, amongſt which were the great offices of Lord Steward, Lord Chamberlain, and Maſter of the Horſe. That the power of the Prince ſhould not extend to the granting any office, reverſion, or penſion, for any other term than during the King's pleaſure, nor to the conferring any peerage. The anſwer of the Prince was firm, dignified, and temperate. He ſaid, "it was with deep regret that he perceived in the propoſitions of Adminiſtration a project for introducing weakneſs, diſorder, and inſecurity into

every branch of political buſineſs;—for ſeparating the Court from the State, and depriving Government of its natural and accuſtomed ſupport; a ſcheme for diſconnecting the authority to command ſervice from the power of animating it by reward; and for allotting to him all the invidious duties of the kingly ſtation, without the means of ſoftening them to the public by any one act of grace, favor, or benignity. He obſerved, that the plea of public utility muſt be ſtrong, manifeſt, and urgent, that could thus require the extinction or ſuſpenſion of any one of thoſe eſſential rights in the Supreme Power or its Repreſentative, or which could juſtify the Prince in conſenting, that in his perſon an experiment ſhould be made to aſcertain with how ſmall a portion of kingly power the executive government of his country could be conducted. In fine, the Prince declared, that his conviction of the evils which might otherwiſe ariſe, outweighed in his mind every other conſideration, and would determine him to undertake the painful truſt impoſed upon him by that melancholy neceſſity, which of all the King's ſubjects he deplored the moſt."

The bill intended to carry into effect this wild and dangerous project, the offspring of party intereſt and perſonal ambition, calculated only, as was juſtly and forcibly remarked, "to eſtabliſh a weak Government and a ſtrong Oppoſition," was brought

brought into the Houſe on the 16th of January, 1789. Long and violent debates enſued, in the courſe of which a proteſt was entered on the Journals of the Houſe of Lords, ſigned by the Duke of York, at the head of the Princes of the blood, and fifty-five other Peers, expreſſive of their higheſt indignation at the reſtrictions on the Executive Authority thus arbitrarily impoſed. Theſe extraordinary proceedings were at length, happily for the public, arreſted in their progreſs, by an intimation from the Lord Chancellor, that the King was declared by his phyſicians to be in a ſtate of convaleſcence. This was followed by a declaration on the 10th of March, that his Majeſty, being perfectly recovered from his indiſpoſition, had ordered a Commiſſion to be iſſued for holding the Parliament in the uſual manner. The tidings of the King's recovery diffuſed the moſt general and heartfelt ſatisfaction. A national thankſgiving was appointed, and the King himſelf went in ſolemn proceſſion to the cathedral of St. Paul's, to offer up his grateful devotions on this event; which was celebrated throughout the kingdom by ſplendid illuminations, and all the other accuſtomed demonſtrations of joy.

The conduct of the Iriſh Parliament in this buſineſs formed a ſtriking contraſt to that of the Engliſh; and was dictated by a policy the moſt ſimple, obvious, and rational. On the aſcertain-

ment of the fact respecting the incapacity of the Sovereign, Mr. Conolly moved, February 11, 1789, "That an Address be presented to the Prince of Wales, requesting him immediately to take upon himself the government of that kingdom as Regent, during the continuance of the King's incapacity." This was carried WITHOUT A DIVISION. To this resolution the House of Lords acceded. But the Lord Lieutenant, the Marquis of Buckingham (late Earl Temple), refusing, by a rash and hazardous exercise of discretion, to transmit this Address to England, Commissioners were appointed by both Houses to present the Address in person to his Royal Highness. The rapid and unexpected recovery of the King happily superseded the object of their commission. But the Prince in his reply declared, "that nothing could obliterate from his memory the sentiments of gratitude which he felt for their generous kindness."

Among the innumerable evils attending the mode of procedure adopted by the British Parliament, one of the most formidable was the possible, and even probable, dissimilarity of the decisions of the two Legislatures. Had the Prince of Wales refused, under the degrading circumstances with which the offer of the Regency was accompanied in England, to accept the government of the kingdom, there is good reason to believe that

it

it would have been conferred upon the Queen, while the Prince would have been conſtituted Regent of Ireland, with the uſual powers of Royalty. This would doubtleſs have given riſe to a queſtion of the moſt important, and at the ſame time of the moſt difficult nature, viz. Whether Ireland, agreeably to the political compact ſubſiſting between the two countries, could conſtitutionally emancipate herſelf from the Executive Government eſtabliſhed in England, under whatever name, or by whatever perſons it might be exerciſed? Of this perplexing and dangerous queſtion, the prudence of the Prince, in accepting of the Regency under all the concomitant humiliating reſtrictions of Parliament, fortunately precluded not only the inveſtigation, but even the mention.

In the ſpeech delivered by the Chancellor in the name of the King to the two Houſes, his Majeſty conveyed to them his warmeſt acknowledgments for the additional proofs they had given of their attachment to his perſon, and their concern for the honor and intereſt of his Crown. It ſoon appeared that the late proceedings of the Miniſtry were in the higheſt degree acceptable to the Sovereign: and thoſe perſons holding poſts under the Government, who had concurred in the meaſures of the Oppoſition, were unceremoniouſly diſmiſſed from their offices; amongſt whom

were the Marquis of Lothian, the Duke of Queenſberry, Lord Carteret, and Lord Malmeſbury.

Before the firſt auſpicious moments of gratulation had ſubſided, Mr. Fox renewed his popular motion for the repeal of the Shop Tax, to which Mr. Pitt did not, in the preſent circumſtances, chooſe any longer to refuſe his aſſent; though he declared he had heard nothing in the way of argument, which induced him to change his original opinion. He accordingly moved an omiſſion of that part of the preamble to the Bill of Repeal, by which the tax was pronounced a partial and oppreſſive impoſition, militating againſt the juſt principles of taxation.

Mr. Dempſter at the ſame time moved for a repeal of the Hawkers and Pedlars Tax, which was originally impoſed on the extraordinary ground of its operating as an indemnity to the ſhopkeeper; thus ſacrificing one claſs of men to the convenience and accommodation of another. A total repeal of this law nevertheleſs could not be obtained; but a bill paſſed to explain and amend the act, by which the more onerous clauſes were mitigated, and theſe friendleſs and injured people reſtored in ſome meaſure to their civil and commercial rights.

A motion of much greater importance was introduced ſoon after this (May 8), by Mr. Beaufoy, being a renewal of the application two years

ago

ago ſubmitted to the Houſe, for the repeal of the Corporation and Teſt Acts; "prompted, as he ſaid, thereto by the unalterable confidence which the Diſſenters repoſed in the diſpoſition of the Houſe to do juſtice to the injured, and afford relief to the oppreſſed. And they could not forget how frequently the Legiſlature had granted the requeſts which cauſeleſs alarms had at firſt induced them to refuſe."

This motion was ſupported by Mr. Fox with a force of argument which could not but make ſome degree of impreſſion on the moſt callous and prejudiced mind. This great Stateſman laid it down as a primary axiom of policy, "that no human Government had juriſdiction over opinions as ſuch, and more particularly over religious opinions. It had no right to preſume that it knew them, and much leſs to act upon that preſumption. When opinions were productive of acts injurious to ſociety, the Law knew how and where to apply the remedy. If the reverſe of this doctrine were adopted, if the actions of men were to be prejudged from their opinions, it would ſow the ſeeds of everlaſting jealouſy and diſtruſt; it would give the moſt unlimited ſcope to the malignant paſſions; it would incite each man to divine the opinions of his neighbor, to deduce miſchievous conſequences from them, and then to prove that he ought to incur diſabilities, to be fet-

tered with reſtrictions, to be haraſſed with penalties.

"From this intolerant principle had flowed every ſpecies of party zeal, every ſyſtem of political perſecution, every extravagance of religious hate. It was an irreverent and impious opinion to maintain, that the Church muſt depend for ſupport as an engine or ally of the State, and not on the evidence of its doctrines, and the excellency of their moral effects. Moderation and indulgence to other ſects were equally conducive to the happineſs of mankind and the ſafety of the Church.

"Since the æra of the Revolution the Church had flouriſhed, becauſe her imaginary fears had been diſſipated. She had improved in knowledge and candor, becauſe, inſtead of being enabled to impoſe ſilence on the Diſſenters by the ſtrong hand of power, ſhe had been obliged to hear their arguments; and the Community at large had found the happy effects, which a colliſion of opinions in open and liberal diſcuſſion, among men living under the ſame Government, never fails to produce. There were many men not of the Eſtabliſhment, to whoſe ſervices their country had a claim. Surely a citizen of this deſcription might be permitted without danger or abſurdity to ſay, 'Though I diſſent from the Church, I am a friend to the Conſtitution; and on religious ſubjects I am entitled to think and act as I pleaſe.'

Ought

Ought the Country to be deprived of the benefit ſhe might derive from the talents of ſuch men, and his Majeſty be prevented from diſpenſing the favors of the Crown except to one deſcription of his ſubjects? Mr. Fox declared himſelf a friend to an Eſtabliſhment of Religion in every country, framed agreeably to the ſentiments of the majority of its inhabitants. But to inveſt that Eſtabliſhment with a monopoly of civil and religious privileges, was palpably unjuſt, and remote from the purpoſe of an Eſtabliſhment, which was no otherwiſe connected with the State, than as it tended to promote morality and good order among the people. The Teſt and Corporation Acts had ſubſiſted, it was contended, for more than a century. True; but how had they ſubſiſted? By repeated ſuſpenſions. For the Indemnity Bills were, literally ſpeaking, annual acts. Where then would be the impropriety of ſuſpending them for ever by an act of perpetual operation?—Let not Great Britain be the laſt to avail herſelf of the general improvement of the human underſtanding. Indulgence to other ſects, a candid reſpect for their opinions, a deſire to promote charity and good-will, were the beſt proofs that any religion could give of its divine origin. To the Church of England in particular he would ſay,

'Tuque prior, tu parce genus qui ducis Olympo.'

Such

Such are the noble and exalted ſentiments which have long elevated Mr. Fox to the rank of the firſt ſtateſman of his age and nation. The motion of Mr. Beaufoy was zealouſly oppoſed by Lord North, in a ſpeech conſiſting, as it was juſtly deſcribed by a Member of the Houſe in debate, of "a ſeries of pompous nothings."

Mr. Pitt alſo again appeared as its opponent, in an artificial harangue decorated with a great external ſhow of candor and ſpecioufneſs of language. On a diviſion the numbers were, Ayes 104, Noes 124; ſo that this important queſtion—important indeed even beyond what the Miniſter himſelf probably had at this period any conception of—was loſt by 20 voices only. This therefore might be regarded as a decided victory on the part of the Diſſenters, had they known how to improve their advantage. But their reſentment againſt the Court and the Miniſter was not at all abated by the ſoft and ſoothing expreſſions by which Mr. Pitt attempted to diſguiſe and palliate his refuſal: and the ground they had gained in deſpite of the courtly machinations againſt them, excited a degree of elation, which led to groſs and fatal indiſcretions.

About this period, a bill of a nature very meritorious was introduced into the Houſe of Peers by Lord Stanhope, for the repeal of a number of obſolete and vexatious laws, inflicting penalties upon perſons abſenting themſelves from the ſervice

vice of the Church, ſpeaking in derogation of the Book of Common Prayer, &c.

On the ſecond reading, Dr. Moore, Archbiſhop of Canterbury, a prelate of a diſpoſition naturally mild and generous, rouſed by this alarming attack upon the CHURCH, roſe to give his decided oppoſition to the meaſure. "The bill under their Lordſhips' diſcuſſion, if permitted to paſs, would ſerve as a cover, his Grace affirmed, to every ſpecies of irreligion. If unreſtrained ſpeaking, writing, and publiſhing on the ſubject of Religion were tolerated, there was ſcarcely any miſchief to the Church or to Civil Society that imagination could frame, which might not be effected. The very foundation of Religion, *as by Law eſtabliſhed*, might be undermined and overthrown."

Dr. Warren, Biſhop of Bangor, obſerved, "that it remained for theſe days of licentiouſneſs to call in queſtion the propriety and wiſdom of thoſe regulations which their Lordſhips were now ſolicited to repeal. To compel men by penalties not to abſent themſelves from the public places of worſhip, did not militate againſt any ſort of religious liberty, ſince the Diſſenters were allowed to reſort to their own congregations: and he who could not communicate with either, might well be ſuppoſed to hold doctrines injurious to the State, and which ought not to be tolerated."

Dr. Halifax, of St. Aſaph, enforced this aſſertion,

tion, and reminded the Houſe of the inſtitution among the Locrians, which obliged every man that propoſed a repeal of an exiſting law, to come into the Aſſembly with a rope about his neck.

Dr. Horſley, of St. David's, expreſſed himſelf in terms ſtill more indignant, and with ſtill greater ardor of holy zeal. He ſaid "the bill in queſtion was calculated to tear away the foundations of the Church of England, and through her means to deſtroy the very being of the Engliſh Conſtitution. The Act of Elizabeth impoſing a fine upon the non-attendance on divine worſhip, was a ſalutary law. It was a miſtake to ſuppoſe the right of private judgment in religion unlimited. The Magiſtrate had a right to puniſh Atheiſm, as a crime againſt the welfare of ſociety; and by the ſame rule, to puniſh a contempt for the Revelation of God in the Chriſtian Religion. There was moreover always danger in diſturbing ancient laws, for the exiſtence of which, at a diſtant period, no good reaſon could be given. Their wiſdom, though not obvious at the period of the repeal, was generally proved by the miſchief that enſued upon their annihilation."

Lord Stormont, enlightened and enraptured with theſe arguments, paid high compliments to the Bench of Biſhops, declaring that they had that day done themſelves infinite credit, and rendered their characters ſacred in the public eſtimation.

mation. It is needleſs to ſay that the bill was rejected.

On the approach of the ſummer receſs, Mr. Dundas, agreeably to the tenor of the India Regulation Bill, made his annual ſtatement of the finances of the Company, which he repreſented as in a moſt proſperous and flouriſhing condition; concluding however, as uſual, with a motion to empower the Company to raiſe the ſum of one million, by way of increaſe of capital, to be ſubſcribed by the preſent proprietors of Eaſt India Stock; and the bill founded on this motion paſſed both Houſes with trivial oppoſition.

The ſeſſion was far advanced, when Mr. Wilberforce brought forward his long expected motion relating to the abolition of the African Slave Trade, which was now become the theme of public execration. Mr. Wilberforce divided his ſubject into three parts—the nature of the trade as it affected Africa itſelf; the appearance it aſſumed in the tranſportation of the ſlaves; and the conſiderations ſuggeſted by their actual ſtate in the Weſt Indies. What muſt be the natural conſequence of a Slave Trade with Africa, with a country vaſt in its extent, not utterly barbarous, but civilized in a very ſmall degree? Was it not plain that ſhe muſt ſuffer from it? that her ſavage manners muſt be rendered ſtill more ferocious, and that a Slave Trade carried on round her coaſts, muſt extend

violence and desolation to her very centre? Such were precisely the circumstances proved by the evidence before the Privy Council. As to the mode in which the slaves were transported from Africa to the West Indies, he affirmed that so much misery condensed into so small a compass, was more than human imagination had ever before conceived. It was the constant practice to set sail in the night, that the slaves, wrung with distress at quitting for ever their native country, might not be sensible of the moment of departure. This dreadful event was marked with songs and tears of lamentation. It appeared in evidence, that a Captain more susceptible than the rest had threatened a woman with the terrors of the lash, because her song was too painful for his feelings. The mortality on board the ships was prodigious; and including the subsequent *seasoning*, it did not amount to less than 50 per cent.

On their arrival in the West Indies, astringents and washes were employed to hide their wounds, and *make them up for sale*—artifices at once fraudulent and fatal. This infamous traffic was also known to be the grave of sailors employed in it. Of 3170 seamen who had sailed from Liverpool in 1787, only 1428 had returned.

Mr. Wilberforce said he felt the wickedness of the Slave Trade to be so enormous, so dreadful, and irremediable, that he could stop at no alternative short

of

of its abolition. He acknowledged that his mind had indeed been haraſſed with the objections of the Weſt India Planters, who had aſſerted that the ruin of their property muſt be the conſequence of this regulation. He could not, however, help diſtruſting their arguments. He could not believe that the Almighty Being, who forbade the practice of rapine and blood, had made rapine and bloodſhed neceſſary to any part of his creation. Light ſoon broke in upon his mind. His ſuſpicions were confirmed by daily information, and the evidence he had now to offer upon this point was deciſive and complete. The principle upon which he founded the neceſſity of the act, was not indeed policy but juſtice; but though juſtice were the principle of the meaſure, he would pledge himſelf to prove it reconcileable with our trueſt political intereſt.

Mr. Wilberforce concluded a long and excellent ſpeech, equally addreſſed to the underſtanding and feelings of the Houſe, and which produced a moſt ſenſible and powerful effect, by moving, not, as was generally expected, a general vote of cenſure and reprobation, which would have impoſed an obligation on the Houſe to have proceeded to ſtrong and deciſive meaſures; but an elaborate and tedious ſeries of complex and ſomewhat dubious propoſitions, twelve in number, ſpecifying the number of ſlaves imported from Africa into the Britiſh Weſt Indies; the different deſcriptions of perſons in-

cluded in this aggregate number; the injury sustained by the seamen employed in the African Trade; the causes of the mortality of the Negroes; and the different *items* of calculation respecting the increase of population in Jamaica and Barbadoes; and they concluded with declaring coldly, that no considerable or permanent inconvenience would result from discontinuing the farther importation.

Upon these propositions, Mr. Wilberforce said he did not mean to urge the House to come to any immediate vote. This afforded ample scope on the part of the anti-abolitionists, Lord Penryn, Lord Maitland, &c. &c. and they eagerly embraced the opportunity to create new difficulty and delay. Mr. Wilberforce declaring that he relied on the evidence contained in the Report of the Privy Council, they insisted that the Merchants and Planters interested in this business were entitled to be heard by Counsel.

Mr. Pitt observed with some degree of indignation, and as a very extraordinary circumstance, that the Report had lain many weeks on the table, and no argument against its sufficiency had been heard of, till the moment was arrived that the House was expected to come to an ultimate vote on the subject. At length, however, he conceded, with the too easy consent of Mr. Wilberforce, to the examination of witnesses on the part of the Slave Merchants

Merchants and Planters—vainly and credulouſly "truſting that unneceſſary delays would not be introduced, as he could by no means ſubmit to the ultimate procraſtination of ſo important a buſineſs." Lord Penryn in the courſe of the debate aſſerting, that, to his knowledge, the Planters were willing to aſſent to any *regulations* of the trade, ſhort of its abolition, Mr. Fox, with glowing eloquence, declared, "that he knew of no ſuch thing as a regulation of robbery and reſtriction of murder. There was no medium: the Legiſlature muſt either aboliſh the trade, or plead guilty to all the iniquity with which it was attended. This was a traffic which no Government could authorize, without participation in the infamy." Evidence being heard at the bar of the Houſe for ſeveral ſucceſſive weeks, it was at length, on the 23d of June, moved by Mr. Alderman Newnham, "that the farther conſideration of the ſubject be deferred to the next ſeſſion."

One of the moſt able and zealous aſſociates of Mr. Wilberforce in this buſineſs, from the commencement of it, was Mr. William Smith, Member for Sudbury, whoſe character in reſpect of honor, probity, and underſtanding, had perhaps no ſuperior within or without the walls of that Houſe. Upon this occaſion Mr. Smith expreſſed his anxiety, "that the queſtion ſhould be brought to a ſpeedy iſſue. He had not heard any good reaſon why

the examination of witneſſes might not be carried on for ſome weeks longer." It was known that the hearing of evidence was at all times thinly attended. If therefore the few Members that did attend were willing to give up their time a little longer, why ſhould other Members complain of an inconvenience, in the ſuffering of which they took no ſhare?" The queſtion, however, was carried without a diviſion, and the temporary Regulation Act of Sir William Dolben was renewed for another year.

It is worthy of tranſient remark, that Mr. Wilberforce, Mr. Smith, and Sir William Dolben, all of whom had conſpicuouſly diſtinguiſhed themſelves in the progreſs of this buſineſs, were of religious perſuaſions very diſſimilar—Mr. Wilberforce being a favorer of the doctrines of Methodiſm, Mr. Smith an avowed Diſſenter, and Sir William Dolben an High Churchman. But on this great queſtion, which involved in it the general intereſts of mankind, all ſubordinate differences vaniſhed, and it ſufficed to every valuable purpoſe, that they were all of the exalted and univerſal religion of HUMANITY*.

The

* In the beautiful Poetic Epiſtle, addreſſed to Mr. Wilberforce by the celebrated Mrs. Barbauld, on the ſubject of the Slave Trade, are to be found the following picturesque and animated lines, deſcriptive of the miſeries entailed on the natives of Africa by this horrid traffic :

Nor

The trial of Mr. Haſtings was reſumed early in the ſeſſion, and the third article, reſpecting preſents illegally and corruptly received by Mr. Haſtings, brought forward by Mr. Burke. In his opening ſpeech in ſupport of this charge, in which the fatal buſineſs of Nund-comar ſtood moſt conſpicuous, Mr. Burke made uſe of the following indiſcreet expreſſion: "that man Mr. Haſtings MURDERED by the hands of Sir Elijah Impey." This afforded a ground of petition from Mr. Haſtings, that this allegation ſhould be proſecuted in

Nor in their palmy walks and ſpicy groves
The form benign of rural pleaſure roves;
No milk-maid's ſong, or hum of village talk,
Sooths the lone Poet in his evening walk;
No willing arm the flail unwearied plies,
Where the mix'd ſounds of cheerful labor riſe;
No blooming maids and frolic ſwains are ſeen
To pay gay homage to their harveſt queen.
No heart-expanding ſcenes their eyes muſt prove,
Of thriving induſtry and faithful love:
But ſhrieks and yells diſturb the balmy air,
Dumb ſullen looks of woe announce deſpair,
And angry eyes thro' duſky features glare.
Friends of the friendleſs—Hail, ye generous band!
Whoſe efforts yet arreſt Heaven's lifted hand;
Around whoſe ſteady brows, in union bright,
The Civic wreath and Chriſtian's palm unite;
Your merit ſtands—no greater and no leſs
Without or with the varniſh of ſucceſs.

ſpecific articles, or that the Houſe ſhould grant him ſuch redreſs as to them ſhould ſeem meet."

After a long debate, the Houſe of Commons reſolved, " that no authority had been given by the Houſe for the purpoſe of making any criminal charge reſpecting the death of Nund-comar, and that the words complained of ought not to have been ſpoken." With this ſort of reparation, though not abſolutely amounting to an affirmation of innocence, Mr. Haſtings was compelled to reſt ſatisfied.

Mr. Grenville, Speaker of the Houſe of Commons, being advanced, upon the reſignation of Lord Sydney, to the office of Secretary of State, and in the ſequel to a peerage, was ſucceeded, after ſitting in the chair of the Houſe ſcarcely ſix months, by Henry Addington, Eſq. The new Speaker ſoon acquired great reputation for dignity, integrity and impartiality in the diſcharge of his office; and he is, by the united voice of contending factions, allowed to rank amongſt the ableſt of thoſe who have occupied that high and difficult ſtation.

In providing the ſupplies of the year, Mr. Pitt was obliged to acknowledge the neceſſity of borrowing the ſum of one million, contrary to his own prediction, that no loan would be wanted. This neceſſity, however, did not ariſe from the unproductiveneſs of the taxes, which roſe even higher than the previous eſtimate of the Miniſter; but from

from extraordinary and unforeſeen cauſes, the principal of which were the ſums voted for the liquidation of the arrear of the Civil Liſt, and of the debt of the Prince of Wales, and the expence of the late Armament: ſo that the general proſpect of future and permanent proſperity remained wholly unimpaired; and the Miniſter acquired, from the preſent ſtate of commerce and of the public funds and revenues, great and juſt increaſe of reputation.

An important operation of finance took place in the courſe of the ſeſſion, in the exchange of the heavy duties on tobacco from the cuſtoms to the exciſe. This was effected with general approbation, and great advantage to the public. It is a circumſtance well worthy of obſervation, as characteriſtic of the caprice and inconſtancy of the public opinion, that this meaſure, which had nearly coſt Sir Robert Walpole his place, and even endangered his life—and againſt which 200 Members of the Houſe of Commons divided on the original motion of the Miniſter, and which he was finally compelled to relinquiſh—was now oppoſed on the third reading of the bill by 29 voices only, in a thin and deſerted Houſe of 90 Members.

The ſeſſion was terminated Auguſt 11, 1789, by a ſpeech from the Lord Chancellor in the name of the Sovereign; in which it was obſerved, "that

although the good offices of the King and his Allies had not been effectual for the reſtoration of the general tranquillity, the ſituation of affairs promiſed to this country the uninterrupted enjoyment of the bleſſings of peace." This was an aſſurance highly and peculiarly grateful, in conſequence of the recent events which had taken place in the different kingdoms of Europe. A war had been kindled, which gradually diffuſed itſelf from the Euxine to the Baltic—from the ſnow-clad mountains of Norway to the arid waſtes of Tartary: and the foundations of a great and ſtupendous revolution had been laid, which, almoſt inſtantly expanding itſelf into gigantic growth, became the ſubject of terror, no leſs than of aſtoniſhment, to the ſurrounding nations.

Never was Europe more deceived than in the idea ſhe had originally formed of the character of the Emperor Joſeph II, upon whom, on his firſt entrance into the grand ſcenes of public life, all eyes were fixed, and under whoſe ſpecious exterior the credulous enthuſiaſm of hope had diſcovered all the qualities of a Legiſlator and a Hero. And he was confidently announced as the Monarch deſtined to throw the ſplendid reputation of Frederic the Great into ſhade. Time however ſoon diſpelled theſe falſe and flattering prepoſſeſſions; and he was perceived to be equally deſtitute of the talents and the virtues neceſſary to the formation of a great and illuſ-

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trious character. Burning with an insatiable thirst for GLORY, that Moloch of Princes, at whose bloody shrine millions of human victims have been offered, his mind seemed eternally harassed and haunted with the enquiry, "What shall I do to be for ever known?"

While that justly celebrated Statesman the Prince de Kaunitz retained his influence over the Councils of the Court of Vienna, a veil was cast over the vices and defects of the Sovereign. But as he advanced in life, and began to act upon his own ideas, and in reliance upon his own judgment, his vanity, his versatility, his rapacity, his rashness, and his folly became apparent to all. Disappointed in his recent and favorite schemes of ambition, his evil genius now suggested another project still more absurd and impracticable than the former.

Since the famous Treaty of Westphalia, by which the independency of Holland had been recognized by Spain, that haughty Power, sensible of the erroneous policy which had lost so valuable a possession, adopted, with relation to the provinces which yet remained, a mild and lenient system of government. On the transfer of the Low Countries to the House of Austria by the Treaty of Utrecht, the same equitable treatment was observed; and that no less under the weak and oppressive reign of Charles VI,

than the auſpicious and benign government of his daughter, the celebrated Maria Thereſa.

During all the viciſſitudes of politics and of power, the Auſtrian Netherlands continued to flouriſh under the protection of their own juſt laws, and the limitations of their free and happy Conſtitution. Of the provinces ſubject to Auſtria, by far the moſt conſiderable and extenſive is Brabant; and although the forms of government eſtabliſhed in the different States bear a cloſe analogy to each other, the Conſtitution of Brabant is regarded as the beſt defined and moſt perfect. Like the Conſtitution of England, it is compounded of three Eſtates, and the executive authority is veſted in the Sovereign, who bears the title of Duke of Brabant. The legiſlative power, including the important prerogative of levying taxes, reſides in the States of Brabant, which is in part an elective and repreſentative aſſembly, though not conſtructed on a very popular plan. The juriſdiction of civil and criminal cauſes is in the cities conſigned to the Magiſtrates, under various equitable reſtrictions. In the villages it nominally appertains to the Lords of the Manors or Baronies; but it is in fact exerciſed by reſpectable perſons, choſen for the moſt part by the inhabitants themſelves, from whoſe deciſion an appeal lies to the Baronial Courts. The Supreme Tribunal of Juſtice is eſtabliſhed at Bruſſels, and

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it is diſtinguiſhed by the appellation of the Council of Brabant. Its functions are not however merely judicial. It is alſo a Council of State, and participates largely in the executive power—for no act of the Sovereign is valid till confirmed by the Council under the Great Seal of Brabant. Theſe and many other privileges were after long and fierce contentions guarantied for ever to the people of Brabant, by a charter granted by one of the antient Dukes, and which, from the triumphal proceſſion of the Prince into his capital, on the original execution of it, is denominated the JOYEUSE ENTRÉE.

The acuteneſs of philoſophical and political theoriſts would no doubt detect with eaſe the groſs defects of this rude and artleſs ſketch of a free Conſtitution. But its general and eſſential excellence is ſufficiently demonſtrated by the proſperous ſtate of the country, and the paſſionate attachment of the people to their eſtabliſhed form of government. This free form of government Joſeph the Second had from deliberate malice, or, more candidly ſpeaking, from exceſs of preſumption and folly, determined to ſubvert and deſtroy. On the 1ſt of January 1787, two Imperial edicts were iſſued, formally ſuppreſſing the antient inſtitutions, and even the Great Council of Brabant; eſtabliſhing in their ſtead a new Council of General Government, aſſiſted by Tribunals erected on the ſevere and arbitrary model of thoſe actually exiſting under

under the proper Auſtrian government. As if this were not enough to rouſe the ſpirit of reſiſtance in the nation, the Emperor, careful to heighten the enthuſiaſm of civil liberty with the rage of religious bigotry, annihilated at the ſame time the charter of the Univerſity of Louvain, and eſtabliſhed a new general ſeminary for the ſtudy of Theology—the Profeſſors to be nominated by the ſole authority of the Emperor. A violent and univerſal commotion inſtantly took place; and the States of Brabant, Flanders, and Hainault, aſſembling, forbade the people in expreſs terms to pay any regard to the late edicts. All ranks of men enrolled themſelves in military aſſociations for their common defence. Deputies were diſpatched to Vienna to repreſent their grievances, and to remonſtrate with the Emperor in perſon againſt theſe atrocious and unprecedented violations of their rights.

Agreeably to the irreſolute and inconſiſtent policy of the Emperor, the Deputies, notwithſtanding his previous menaces of vengeance, were moſt graciouſly received at the Imperial Court. The Sovereign profeſſed himſelf well-diſpoſed to reſtore their antient privileges as contained in the *Joyeuſe Entrée*, and intimated an intention of viſiting the Netherlands, to take meaſures with the States for the welfare of the people.

In a ſhort time Count Murray, the Auſtrian Governor, publiſhed a proclamation, completely revoking

voking the late proceedings, and re-eſtabliſhing the antient government. Happily for the people of Flanders, the capricious politics of the Emperor had by this time directed their views to a diſtant and oppoſite quarter. The advantages acquired by Ruſſia in conſequence of the Treaty of 1784, excited the chagrin and envy of that Monarch; and the Turkiſh Empire at this period preſenting an eaſy and inviting proſpect of conqueſt, a negotiation was ſet on foot with this view between the two Imperial Courts; and in the ſpring of 1787, a conference took place between the Czarina and the Emperor at the new capital of Cherſon, whither the Empreſs of the Ruſſias had with great pomp and ſplendor repaired, in order to her inauguration as Sovereign of the Taurica. Scarcely did ſhe deign to affect concealment of her hoſtile intentions; and over one of the gates of the city ſhe cauſed to be inſcribed, "This is the Gate which leads to BYZANTIUM."

The Ottoman Porte, fully apprized of the machinations of the Imperial Courts, took a haſty reſolution, notwithſtanding her own extreme unpreparedneſs for commencing offenſive operations, to publiſh an immediate declaration of war againſt Ruſſia—in the hope probably of being able to conciliate the Emperor before his plan of hoſtility was fully matured. This however was a vain expectation; the Emperor ordering, after a very ſhort interval,

terval, a Memorial to be delivered by his Ambaſſador at Conſtantinople, ſtating, "that he was compelled by Treaty to aſſiſt his Ally the Czarina with 80,000 men; and if this ſhould be conſidered by the Porte as an act of hoſtility, he was prepared for every event. Not waiting the anſwer, he made, on the 2d of December 1787, a moſt perfidious attempt to ſurpriſe the fortreſs of Belgrade. Being diſappointed in this enterpriſe, he thought proper to offer an apology for his conduct, which only ſerved by its futility to demonſtrate the weakneſs of the government which condeſcended to accept it.

The Imperial Manifeſto, containing a formal declaration of war, at length appeared, February 1788. Contrary to the antient barbarous practice, the Ambaſſadors of both the Imperial Courts were ſuffered to depart from Conſtantinople without moleſtation. The anſwer to the Auſtrian declaration, in a calm and dignified manner, reproaches the Emperor with "wantonly violating a peace of fifty years continuance, without being able to allege a ſingle injury or pretext." Numerous inſtances are adduced, in which, for the preſervation of peace, the Sublime Porte had complied with unreaſonable requiſitions: and they juſtly obſerve, that they had never upon any occaſion taken advantage of the embarraſſments of the Houſe of Auſtria, but had always acted with a liberality and good faith ill requited in the preſent inſtance.

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The operations of the Germans were in the commencement of the war far from ſucceſsful. Little impreſſion could be made upon the Turkiſh frontier; and no ſooner had the Grand Vizier taken the command of the army, than the Turks became the aſſailants; and the Emperor, who commanded in perſon, after ſuffering repeated loſſes, was compelled to a precipitate and diſgraceful retreat, leaving the Bannat and the Lower Hungary to the mercy of the enemy. On the weſtern ſide, however, where the famous Marſhal Laudohn commanded, the towns of Dubitza and Novi were reduced after a vigorous defence. On the eaſtern quarter, the city of Choczim ſurrendered, September 29th, to the united arms of Ruſſia and Auſtria. And before the end of the year, the important fortreſs of Oczakow, after ſuſtaining a ſiege of ſeveral months, was carried by ſtorm; the Ruſſians marching to the aſſault over the frozen ſnow, with which the trenches were filled.

A deciſive ſuperiority in the Black Sea was alſo obtained by the repeated victories gained on the part of the Ruſſians by the Prince of Naſſau over the famous Turkiſh Admiral Haſſan Pacha.

In the mean time the King of Sweden, actuated by that ſpirit of unprincipled ambition, ſo uſually the characteriſtic of Princes as to be deemed ſcarcely the object of cenſure, and prompted likewiſe by the King of Pruſſia, and the Powers

Powers in alliance with the Court of Berlin and inimical to Ruſſia, entered ſuddenly, at the head of a conſiderable army, the territory of Ruſſian Finland, whence the idea of paſſing by a direct and rapid march to Peterſburg ſeemed not wholly chimerical. But a ſubject of bitter chagrin awaited him in the abſolute and pertinacious refuſal of his officers to engage in offenſive war, on the patriotic ground, or perhaps the traitorous pretext, that the King had not, agreeably to the proviſions of the Conſtitution of 1772, obtained the previous conſent of the States.

The Court of St. Peterſburgh, on the firſt intimation of the attack from Sweden, had called for the aid and aſſiſtance of Denmark, conformably to the terms of the Treaty of Alliance ſubſiſting between the two Courts. Denmark had been for ſome years paſt under the adminiſtration of the Prince Royal, whoſe knowledge and prudence, far exceeding the immaturity of his age, were the happy reſult of a good natural underſtanding, improved to the utmoſt by an excellent and admirable education. The Prince Regent, on his acceſſion to power, had reſtored the former Miniſters of the Daniſh Court, diſplaced by Struenſee, to their offices, amongſt whom was the Count de Bernſtorf, whoſe wiſdom and firmneſs have in the courſe of events been rendered very conſpicuous. On the preſent occaſion, the Court of Copenhagen entered entirely

entirely into the views of the Czarina; and in the month of September 1788, a large body of Daniſh troops, commanded by Prince Charles of Heſſe Caſſel, accompanied by the Prince of Denmark in perſon, paſſing over to Norway, unexpectedly entered the Swediſh province of Wermlandia, and advanced to the city of Gottenburgh with trivial oppoſition.

Alarmed at this formidable invaſion, the King of Sweden repaired in perſon, with expedition almoſt incredible, to the defence of this important place; which being attacked thus unprepared, ſeemed very unable to reſiſt the force of the Danes. But at this critical moment the Courts of London and Berlin interpoſed their powerful mediation in favor of Sweden. Early in October, Mr. Hugh Elliott, Envoy at Copenhagen, addreſſed himſelf firſt by letter and afterwards perſonally to the Prince Regent, requiring him, in the name of the Allied Courts, to conſent to an immediate ceſſation of hoſtilities. "War," ſaid the Ambaſſador, "is perhaps at this very moment declared with Denmark by Pruſſia and England. But if your Highneſs will conſent to what I propoſe, I will immediately diſpatch couriers to ſtop, if poſſible, the invaſion of a Pruſſian army in Holſtein, and the ſailing of the Britiſh fleet."

Under theſe circumſtances the reſolution of the Prince was ſoon taken, and a ſuſpenſion of arms

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ſigned on the part of Denmark, October 9, 1788, which, after an interval of delay, was converted into a Treaty of Neutrality.

The beginning of the following year was ſignalized by the death of the Grand Signor Achmet IV. a prince apparently of beneficent and upright intentions, but whoſe talents were utterly inadequate to the mighty taſk of reſtoring the declining empire of the Ottomans to its priſtine proſperity and greatneſs. He was ſucceeded by his nephew, Selim III. ſon of the late Emperor Muſtapha, whoſe firſt act of authority conſiſted in the depoſition of the Grand Vizier, Juſſuf Pacha, who had conducted the operations of the laſt campaign with ſingular ability and perſonal ſucceſs.

The Emperor, ſinking under the preſſure of diſeaſe and diſappointment, had retired to Vienna; and the renowned Marſhal Laudohn being appointed to the chief command, the operations of the war were renewed with conſummate ſkill and wonderful increaſe of vigor. After the reduction of Gradiſca, this veteran hero proceeded to form the ſiege of Belgrade; and on the 8th of Oct. 1789, that important city, the bulwark of the Ottoman Empire, ſurrendered on terms of honorable capitulation. The remainder of the campaign preſented a ſeries of the moſt rapid ſucceſſes. Cladova, Semendria, Czernitz, &c. followed the example

of Belgrade. Orſova only attempted a ſerious reſiſtance, and it was not reduced till after a long inveſtment and blockade.

On the eaſtern ſide, the Prince of Cobourg, General of the Auſtrian army in Walachia, after gaining a conſiderable advantage in an action fought near Foczan, attacked, in conjunction with the Ruſſian General Suwarrow, with a very inferior force, September 22, 1789, the army of the new Grand Vizier, Haſſan Pacha, a raſh and ignorant commander, at Martineſti, and gained a complete victory. This was attended with the immediate capture of Buchareſt, the capital of Walachia, and the almoſt entire reduction of the country north of the Danube. In the mean time, Bielgorod on the Black Sea, and the city of Bender on the Tartarian frontier, ſurrendered to the arms of Ruſſia, now conducted by Prince Potemkin.

During this campaign the war in the North was carried on little to the advantage of Sweden: for although the King of Sweden had entirely reeſtabliſhed his authority, and taken a ſevere vengeance on the individuals who by their audacious and inflexible contumacy had arreſted the progreſs of his arms, he could not ſo eaſily regain the advantages he had loſt by that unexpected and unſeaſonable oppoſition. The immenſe power of Ruſſia was now fully exerted. Sweden was reduced to act upon the defenſive in Finland; and

various naval encounters took place, in which the bravery and ſuperior ſkill of the Swedes did by no means compenſate for the Ruſſian ſuperiority of force.

In the enſuing campaign of 1790, the triumphs of the Ruſſian arms over the Ottomans continued without any conſiderable interruption. The progreſs of theſe barbarous conquerors had been throughout marked with blood and deſolation; but the capture, under General Suwarrow, of the city of Iſmail, taken by ſtorm December the 22d, 1790, exceeded in horror every action of the preſent war, and may vie with that of any preceding one. The garriſon, conſiſting of the flower of the Turkiſh army, was maſſacred in cold blood, and the inhabitants indiſcriminately given up to the worſe than brutal licentiouſneſs of an enraged ſoldiery.

The military ſucceſſes of the Auſtrians under the heroic Laudohn, ſerved only to incite the faithleſs and perfidious Joſeph to renew his attempts againſt his ſubjects of Flanders and Brabant. Count Murray, diſtinguiſhed by his lenity of temper, was ſucceeded in the government by Count Trautmanſdorff; and the military placed under the command of General Dalton, an officer of approved ſkill, but of unrelenting and ſavage ferocity.

The new ſyſtem commenced with the revival

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of the former attempt againſt the Univerſity of Louvain. This being reſolutely reſiſted, the Rector and Profeſſors were expelled by the point of the bayonet, Auguſt 1788, and many lives loſt by the indiſcriminate firing of the ſoldiery. Similar outrages and exceſſes taking place at Antwerp, Mechlin, &c. in conſequence of the orders iſſued by the Government; and military law, enforced by military execution, being in a manner proclaimed through the provinces, a prodigious emigration of the principal inhabitants immediately ſucceeded. The emigrants being favored and protected by the Dutch Government, now under the influence of England and Pruſſia, aſſembled in numerous bodies on the frontier: at length, in the autumn of 1789, they entered Auſtrian Flanders in great force, and in a very ſhort ſpace of time overran the whole country, a few fortreſſes excepted, the Auſtrians flying before them with the moſt diſgraceful precipitation.

The Emperor now once more offered, in the moſt flattering and conciliatory language, to reſtore to them their ancient Conſtitution, and even to endow them with additional privileges; but his overtures were rejected with ſcorn. The States of Brabant aſſembling at Bruſſels December the 22d, 1789, in concert with the Deputies of the other provinces, formally diſclaimed allegiance to the Emperor, and proceeded to the ap-

pointment of an Adminiſtration. General Vandermerſch, diſtinguiſhed for his patriotiſm and bravery, was nominated to the command of the troops. M. Vander-noodt was declared Prime Miniſter, and M. Van-Eupen Secretary of State.

In the month of January 1790, the plan of a federal Conſtitution was formed by the Belgic States—ſuch was the appellation they now aſſumed—nearly ſimilar to that of the United Provinces. Unfortunately, however, it ſoon appeared that the leaders of the revolt, either little underſtanding or little regarding the eſſential rights of the people, had merely changed the Imperial deſpotiſm to an Ariſtocratical tyranny. The Catholic religion was eſtabliſhed in its moſt intolerant form, the power of arbitrary impriſonment was aſſumed, the liberty of the preſs diſallowed, and the immunities of the privileged orders confirmed and even extended.

In the midſt of theſe tranſactions, and while the Inſurgents were at the height of their ſucceſſes, died, February 1790, the Emperor Joſeph. He was ſucceeded in his hereditary dominions by his brother Leopold, Grand Duke of Tuſcany, and who now took upon him the ſtyle and title of King of Hungary. This prince, as the Sovereign of a ſmall State, had acquired the reputation of moderation, and even ſagacity. But in proportion to the elevation of his ſituation his faults

faults became more conſpicuous, while his excellences either wholly diſappeared, or were henceforth very dimly ſeen.

Intereſting as the tranſactions now related appeared in the view of Europe, they nevertheleſs yielded both in importance and ſingularity to the events which were at the ſame time taking place in the kingdom of France.

The appointment of the Archbiſhop of Touloufe as ſucceſſor to M. de Calonne, proved the ſource of equal diſappointment to the Court and to the Nation. On his elevation to the poſt of Miniſter, his patriotiſm ſeemed to vaniſh; and, by loſing the confidence of the People, he deprived himſelf of the power of being ſerviceable to the Monarch. The project of the Court to obtain the ſanction of the Aſſembly of Notables to the meaſures in contemplation had proved wholly abortive; recourſe muſt now again therefore be had to the Parliament of Paris; and on the 12th of June 1787, an edict was ſent to that body for enregiſtry, impoſing a heavy duty on ſtamps. Inſtead of a loyal and dutiful compliance, the Parliament demanded the communication of ſuch documents as ſhould enable them to judge of the neceſſity of introducing new taxes. That this was a juſt claim, they ſaid, the very expreſſion of *verifying* the royal edicts implied.

The refuſal of this demand produced a refuſal

on their part to enregiſter the edict; and after violent debates, and repeated efforts of the patriotic party in Parliament, it was at length voted that a National Aſſembly would be neceſſary previous to the impoſition of a new tax, and a reſolution at the ſame time paſſed to ſupplicate the Sovereign to aſſemble the STATES GENERAL of the kingdom.

In the Remonſtrance preſented on this occaſion by Parliament to the Throne, the ſtamp duty is pronounced more dangerous than even the exploded *gabelle*; and they remark, "that after five years of peace, after an augmentation of the revenue during the preſent reign of five millions ſterling, it was ſcarcely to have been expected that the name of TAX ſhould have been pronounced by a beneficent Sovereign, but for the purpoſe of alleviating the burdens of the people."

The anſwer of the King was peremptory and haughty. Far from conceding to the wiſhes and prayers of the Parliament, he roſe ſtill higher in his demands. Reſerving to a future day the declaration of his intentions reſpecting the ſtamp tax, he tranſmitted to them a new edict of far greater importance, for commuting the exiſting *vingtièmes* into a regular and equal land-tax, "which from the zeal and loyalty of his Parliament, his Majeſty was pleaſed to ſay, he expected them immediately to regiſter."

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The Parliament, aſſuming more intrepidity as the danger became more imminent, ſummoned the Peers of France on the following day, as was uſual in great emergencies, to aſſiſt in their deliberations; and it was voted in full aſſembly, that the Parliament perſiſted in their reſolution, and renewed their ſupplication to the Sovereign to aſſemble the States General of the kingdom.

Before the ſecond Addreſs could be preſented, a Royal Meſſage was delivered, announcing the intention of the King to hold a Bed of Juſtice. The Parliament, immediately re-aſſembling, came to ſeveral reſolutions expreſſive of their determined reſiſtance. The Bed of Juſtice was nevertheleſs held; and in defiance of the reſolutions read by the Firſt Preſident, M. d'Aligre, the edicts were forcibly enregiſtered. Theſe proceedings, contemptuouſly deſcribed as "the empty form of collecting by the Keeper of the Seals the opinions of the Aſſembly, where no one could give a vote," were at the ſubſequent meeting of Parliament declared null and void, and expunged from their records.

This reſolute oppoſition of the Parliament produced a wonderful effect on the already highly agitated ſtate of the public mind. Such were the apprehenſions entertained by the Government of the general ſpirit which pervaded the maſs of the people, that great numbers of the military were

assembled at Paris, and the Members of the Courts of Justice were obliged to pass to their sittings through armed ranks of soldiers with bayonets fixed.

The government of France plainly appeared at this moment to be a government resting merely on the precarious basis of military force, without possessing, as a collateral security, a single particle of the esteem, confidence, or affection, of the nation. On the 15th of August, 1787, *lettres de cachet* were issued against the Parliament of Paris, transferring their sittings to Troyes, in Champagne, one hundred miles from the capital. Previous to their exile they passed an animated resolve, "That the French Monarchy would be reduced to a state of despotism, if Ministers, abusing the authority of the King, might dispose of men's persons by *lettres de cachet*, of their property by beds of justice, of causes civil and criminal by annullings and evocations, and suspend the course of justice by particular exiles or arbitrary translations."

All France seemed to interest itself in the disgrace of the Parliament. The flame of opposition and disaffection increased every moment. Almost all the public bodies in the kingdom joined in petitioning the Throne, not in an humble and submissive, but in a bold and peremptory tone, for the recall of that Assembly, and the convocation

of

of the States General. The Parliament of Grenoble declared "the rights of property to be equally sacred, and secured by the same laws, as the right of the King to the throne;" and the Parliament of Besançon, in reprobating the emission of the *lettres de cachet*, scrupled not to affirm, "that the Parisian Magistrates ought to have yielded no sort of obedience to them."

In this situation the new Minister, wavering, hesitating, and trembling for his safety, advised the Monarch, in his answer to the address of the Court of Aids, September 2, to signify his intention for the present to suspend the execution of the obnoxious edicts, and on the 19th of that month letters of revocation were issued, and the Parliament was permitted to resume its functions. The first measure of the executive government subsequent to this event, a measure highly consonant to the predominant spirit of liberty in the nation, was the promulgation of an edict for the toleration of the Non-Catholics, nearly similar to the famous edict of Nantz, repealed in the last century. This popular law was registered by the Parliament without difficulty; but with respect to the financial projects of the Government they continued as refractory as ever. The plan now proposed by the Minister was that of a series of loans, amounting in the aggregate to about eighteen millions sterling, for five successive years, at the end of which term he engaged

gaged the honor of the Sovereign that the States General ſhould be convoked. This offer was treated with contempt. To promiſe a convocation of the States General when the deficiency of the finances ſhould be filled up, was ſaid to amount to a promiſe to call them together when they would no longer be wanted. The embarraſſments of the Miniſter hourly accumulated. The expedient of a Bed of Juſtice had been tried with very ill ſucceſs. It was now, therefore, reſolved to hold a *Séance Royale*, in which the meaſure ſhould be debated in the King's preſence, previous to the enregiſtry, as a milder and more equitable mode of proceeding. Upon this occaſion M. Lamoignon, Keeper of the Seals, by the command of his Majeſty, ſtated to the Parliament, in an eloquent and *inſtructive* oration, the eſtabliſhed and unalterable principles of the French Monarchy. "To the King alone belonged the ſovereign power, and to GOD only was he accountable for its exerciſe. To the King belonged the power of convoking the States; he alone could judge of their utility and neceſſity, and he was the ſole arbiter of the grievances and complaints of his ſubjects. He ventured to aſſert, that the wiſh now generally entertained of calling together the States General had ORIGINATED with the King, whoſe zeal for the public good perpetually outran the deſires of his people. He therefore rebuked the Parliament for the diſreſpectful

importunity with which they had ſolicited this meaſure; and he declared the eſtabliſhment of provincial aſſemblies, on the plan deviſed by the late Miniſter, to be fraught with more ſolid advantages to the community at large."

The ſitting continued ſeven hours. The debates of the Parliament, notwithſtanding the preſence of the Sovereign, were conducted not only with freedom, but with violence and aſperity. It was affirmed by one Member, l'Abbé Sabatier, "that the only difference between a Bed of Juſtice and a *Séance Royale* was, that one had all the frankneſs of deſpotiſm, and the other all its hypocriſy." And M. Freteau, ſpeaking of the recent accommodation between England and France on the ſubject of Holland, ſaid, "it was a proceeding at which Louis XIV. would have bluſhed." At length the King roſe and declared, "that having heard the ſentiments of the aſſembly, he perſiſted in his opinion; he therefore directed the edict of the ſucceſſive loans to be immediately regiſtered." On this the Duke of Orleans, Firſt Prince of the Blood, who aſpired to the diſtinction of Head of the popular party, declared to the King, "that he regarded this meaſure as illegal." The King having retired in anger, the Duke formally recorded his diſſent, and the Parliament paſſed a reſolution abjuring every ſort of concern in the enregiſtry that had then taken place. On the following day the Duke of

of Orleans and Meſſrs. Sabatier and Freteau were ſent into exile—the former to his chateau in the country, the two latter to impriſonment in diſtant parts of the kingdom; and by expreſs command of the King, the reſolution of Parliament was eraſed from their records.

The famous remonſtrance of the Parliament upon theſe violent proceedings, preſented to the King March 1788, after ſeveral previous ineffectual ones, was fraught with the moſt glowing and energetic ſentiments of liberty. They declare, "That the laws of Nature and of the Conſtitution ſhall never reproach them for preſerving, in ſuch a criſis, a ſhameful inactivity, or a guilty ſilence—Liberty is declared by them to be an impreſcriptible right, and Juſtice an univerſal duty, anterior to the laws, and equally obligatory on the Monarch and the Subject. The practice of *lettres de cachet* overturns this ſyſtem—Juſtice thereby becomes a mere illuſion, and Liberty an empty name. Where no perſonal ſecurity exiſts, public ſafety is but an imaginary bliſs; and where the practice of *lettres de cachet* ſubſiſts, perſonal ſecurity cannot exiſt. Could your Majeſty but interrogate thoſe victims of arbitrary power abandoned and forgotten in thoſe impenetrable dungeons where ſilence and injuſtice ever dwell, you would then know to what torments is condemned the wretch for whom the ſun riſes without hope, and the night returns without repoſe,

poſe. We have authority to believe that the Duke of Orleans and Meſſrs. Sabatier and Freteau are not guilty; were they ſo, the right of judging them is reſerved for the Parliament, and the prerogative of pardoning to your Majeſty. Liberty is not a privilege, but a right; and it is the duty of all Governments to reſpect that right. It is not a Prince of the Blood, nor two Magiſtrates, that the Parliament claims now in the name of the laws and of reaſon; it is three French individuals—THREE MEN." To this remonſtrance the King, with true monarchical apathy and pride, anſwered, "that his Parliament muſt with due reſpect and ſilence confide in his wiſdom, and that he forbade them to have or publiſh any farther deliberations on the ſubject."

A project more raſh and chimerical than any hitherto entertained by the Miniſter, was now diſcloſed. This was no leſs than the eſtabliſhment of a ſupreme Court by the name of the COUR PLENIERE, conſiſting of Members to be nominated by the King, and to be veſted with the power of enregiſtering the royal edicts—thus ſuperſeding the exiſting Parliaments in the higheſt and moſt appropriate branch of their authority. The Parliament of Paris, appriſed of the fatal ſtroke that was meditating, publiſhed, May 7, a declaration, copies of which were tranſmitted to all the other Parliaments, expreſſive of their determined reſolution to oppoſe

to

to the utmoſt this arbitrary and unconſtitutional innovation. "The ſyſtem of complying with the King's abſolute will, ſay this Aſſembly, as expreſſed in his different anſwers, proves the Miniſter's deſtructive project of annihilating the principles of the National Government, which Parliament is bound to maintain, and from which it will never depart."

The Court, reſolving to proſecute their nefarious deſigns, iſſued orders for the arreſting Meſſrs. D'Eſpremenil and Monſambert, two celebrated Counſellors and patriotic Members of the Parliament; and a party of the military, ſurrounding at midnight the ſeat of juſtice, demanded the immediate ſurrender of the two magiſtrates. A moſt animated remonſtrance from the Parliament was the reſult of this act of tyranny—happy had the ſentiments it contained produced their juſt effect on the mind of the Monarch! "Your Parliament is confirmed, SIRE, ſay they, by every proceeding, of the entire innovation which is aimed at in the ſyſtem of Monarchy; but, SIRE, the French nation will never adopt the deſpotic meaſures to which you are adviſed: the fundamental laws of the kingdom MUST not be TRAMPLED on, and your authority can only be eſteemed ſo long as it is tempered with juſtice. We beſeech your Majeſty not to ſuffer apparent or momentary advantages to divert your attention, as they may only produce unhappy con-

conſequences. Your Majeſty will ſooner or later diſcover the juſtice of our repreſentations."

A Bed of Juſtice being in defiance of the warnings and threatenings of Parliament held, and the edict for the eſtabliſhment of the COUR PLENIERE forcibly enregiſtered, the moſt violent commotions enſued throughout the kingdom, which every where wore the appearance of hoſtility and war. The Firſt Preſident of the Parliament, in the name of that Aſſembly, informed the King that the Parliament would acknowledge no authority which infringed on the complete exerciſe of their prerogatives. The Parliament of Rouen pronounced the edicts in queſtion to be null and void, and all perſons aſſiſting in the execution of them to be traitors to the nation; and for this daring act of patriotiſm *lettres de cachet* were immediately executed againſt them. The Parliaments of Rennes, of Grenoble, and of Metz, diſtinguiſhed by their zeal in the ſame cauſe, were in like manner ordered into baniſhment. Great bodies of the military were in motion; and every ſtep taken on the part of the Court indicated a reſolution to perſevere in the plan of coercion, when, on the ſudden, the courage of the King and his Miniſters once more totally failed them; and an order of Council was publiſhed, Auguſt 8, fixing the convocation of the States to the firſt of May 1789, and SUSPENDING during

during the interval the inſtitution of the COUR PLENIERE.

On the 16th of Auguſt a ſecond Arret of Council was promulgated, avowing the inability of the Court to anſwer the ordinary demands upon the Royal Treaſury; and directing the future payments to be made partly in money, and partly in notes bearing an intereſt of five per cent. This was regarded as a direct act of bankruptcy; and the clamor, confuſion and conſternation which enſued were ſo great, that the Archbiſhop of Toulouſe, no longer able to reſiſt the torrent, thought proper to reſign his office after an adminiſtration of little more than a year, diſtinguiſhed by its inconſiſtency, imbecility, and temerity. To conſole him in his diſgrace, he was tranſlated to the rich Archiepiſcopal See of Sens, and decorated with the Roman purple.

The voice of France called aloud for the re-inſtatement of M. Necker, who was now a ſecond time placed at the head of the finances. The reputation of the new Miniſter operated as a ſort of charm. By the adoption of wiſe meaſures adapted to the preſent exigencies, the immediate embarraſſments of Government were removed. All eyes were now turned to the approaching convocation of the States General, previous to which a ſecond Convention of the Notables was held (October 5, 1788) in order to determine ſeveral important queſ-

tions that had arisen relative to the formation of the Assembly of the States. It appeared to be nearly the unanimous opinion of the Notables, that it should be constructed on the model of the last Assembly convened in 1614; and a doubt was even suggested, whether any power short of that of the States General deliberating in the antient manner by the established orders of Nobles, Clergy, and the *Tiers Etat*, could superinduce upon it any material alteration. The Notables were dissolved on the 12th of December 1788.

The final decision of the Court was at length made known by a decree of Council, dated 27th of December; by which it was determined, that the number of deputies to the ensuing States General should not fall short of one thousand; that it should be apportioned with all practicable accuracy to the population and financial contributions of the different bailliages; and that the representation of the *Tiers Etat* should be equal to the sum of the representations of the other two orders—a concession eagerly desired by the nation, and attended with the most important consequences.

At length, on the 5th of May 1789, a day ever memorable in the annals of France and of the world, the Assembly of the States General met at Versailles, and the session was opened by a speech from the King, couched in terms of patriotic and paternal regard, such as princes well know upon

occaſion how to adopt. Although the exceſſive repugnance of the Court to the adoption of this meaſure had been moſt notorious, his Majeſty congratulated the Aſſembly on the arrival of the day which he had ſo long *panted* to ſee. "The public ſpirit," ſaid the Monarch, "is in a ferment, but an Aſſembly of the Repreſentatives of the Nation will certainly hearken to no other counſels than thoſe founded on juſtice and wiſdom. Whatever may be expected from the moſt tender ſolicitude for the public good, whatever can be aſked from a Sovereign the ſincereſt friend of his people, you may, you ought to hope from me." At this period, no doubt, the Court was ready to ſubmit to the neceſſity, which it could not but recognize, of making great and permanent conceſſions for the ſatisfaction of the nation, and the reſtoration of the public tranquillity. But to aſcribe to the Monarch the moſt diſtant idea of a voluntary departure from the antient and eſtabliſhed prerogatives of ſovereignty, would be the extreme of weakneſs and credulity.

The firſt object of the States was the "verification of their powers." This ceremony the *Tiers Etat* inſiſted, to the aſtoniſhment of the ſuperior orders, could only take place in a common aſſembly, voting not by orders, but by poll. The admiſſion of this pretenſion involved in it no leſs than the abſolute ſubverſion of the antient Conſtitution of the States; and it was reſiſted in the

ſtrongeſt

ſtrongeſt manner by the ſuperior orders, as a flagrant uſurpation. On the other hand, the *Tiers Etat* plainly perceived that the antient mode of voting by orders would reduce them, the real repreſentatives of the people, to whom it peculiarly appertained to eſtabliſh freedom in France, to mere ciphers.

After ſix weeks of inaction, the *Tiers Etat*, at the ſuggeſtion of the Abbé Syeyes (June 17), took the daring and deciſive ſtep of declaring itſelf the Legiſlative Body, by the appellation of the NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, and proceeded to the verification of their powers.

On the 19th of June, the Chamber of the Clergy paſſed a reſolution, importing their acquieſcence in this deciſion. Alarmed in the higheſt degree at the ſituation of affairs, the Monarch held on the 23d a Royal Seſſion, in which he propoſed a plan of government, liable indeed to many objections, but containing the great outlines of a free Conſtitution. Agreeably to this plan, the diſtinction of orders was preſerved, allowing them nevertheleſs to debate in common on emergent occaſions, with the Royal approbation. In fine, the King declared, in virtue of his Royal authority, the proceedings of the 17th null and void—and ordered the Deputies immediately to ſeparate. This was the deciſive moment. An unreſerved obedience to the order of the King would have

rendered them contemptible in their own eyes, and in thoſe of the Nation, which had received with unbounded acclamation the reſolution reprobated by the Monarch. The queſtion to be determined was, whether they would be ſatisfied to accept from the Royal benignity the imperfect and precarious boon now offered? or whether, at the imminent riſque of their lives and fortunes, they would make one grand effort to eſtabliſh a conſtitution founded on the eternal and immutable principles of equal and perfect freedom? Impelled by a glorious and reſiſtleſs enthuſiaſm, they heſitated not for a moment which of theſe alternatives to embrace. When the King retired, he was followed by all the Nobles and a part of the Clergy: the Commons alone remained motionleſs on the benches. The Marquis de Brezé, Grand Maſter of the Ceremonies, addreſſing himſelf to the Preſident, M. Bailli, ſaid, "SIR, you know the orders of the King:"— to which the Preſident with Roman dignity replied, "The people of France in their collective capacity have no orders to receive." And M. Mirabeau, a Member highly diſtinguiſhed in the ſequel by his talents and eloquence in the Aſſembly, ſtarting up, added, "Go tell your maſter, that we are here by the power of the people, and that nothing ſhall expel us but the bayonet."

On their next meeting, the Aſſembly were joined by the majority of the Clergy, and forty-nine mem-

bers of the Nobility, with the Duke of Orleans at their head; and on the 27th, at the expreſs inſtance of the King, agreeably to his character-iſtic inconſtancy, by the remaining members of the ſuperior orders; though the Duke of Luxemburgh predicted, as it is ſaid, to the Monarch, "that from the day the States ſhould vote by numbers only, from that moment he was at their mercy."

The aſſent of the King was however falſe and hollow. An army of 35,000 men, collected from various parts, were ſtationed under the command of Marſhal Broglio in the vicinity of Verſailles and Paris. Camps were marked out for a ſtill greater force, and lines of fortification drawn. A moſt ſpirited remonſtrance was preſented to the King by the Aſſembly, requeſting, or rather inſiſting upon, the removal of the troops. This was peremptorily refuſed; but his Majeſty declared his willingneſs to indulge the Aſſembly by a removal of their ſittings to Soiſſons, a ſituation far more commodious for the purpoſes of the Court.

On the 11th of July M. Necker was ſuddenly diſmiſſed, and ordered to depart the kingdom in twenty-four hours; and with him his friend M. Montmorin, Miniſter for Foreign Affairs. In the diſgrace of M. Necker the Aſſembly ſaw their own ruin determined: and they paſſed a reſolve, that the late Miniſters carried with them the confidence and regret of the Nation. But the popular en-

thuſiaſm having now reached its height, a moſt aſtoniſhing inſurrection took place at Paris on the 14th of July, in which the caſtle of the Baſtille was carried by ſtorm; the ſoldiery refuſing to obey the orders of their officers, and many joining the aſſailants.

The Monarch, aſtoniſhed and intimidated at theſe proceedings, once more varied his policy; and, appearing in perſon the next day in the National Aſſembly, declared, "he had iſſued orders for the immediate removal of the troops." A burſt of joy and acclamation ſucceeded; and it was now at laſt hoped, that the Monarch, ſenſible of the evil counſels by which he had been deceived and miſled, would not henceforth deviate from the path of political rectitude. M. Necker and Count Montmorin were immediately re-inſtated in their offices. The Count d'Artois, Marſhal Broglio, the Prince of Condé, and other leaders of the Court Faction, were compelled to ſeek for ſafety in flight: and on the 17th of July the King made his triumphal entry into Paris.

The Aſſembly now proceeded without interruption in their labors; and in a ſhort time ſeveral very important decrees, containing the firſt principles of the new Conſtitution, importing the ſubordination of the Executive, the ſupremacy of the Legiſlative, and the independency of the Judicial Powers, were preſented for the Royal acceptance.

After

After a delay of many weeks, and an urgent re-application, the Royal aſſent was moſt reluctantly given, with an expreſs ſalvo for the antient eſſential and conſtitutional prerogatives of the Crown. All the former jealouſies were now revived; and it was univerſally rumored and believed, that preparations were in train to facilitate the retreat of the King to Metz in Lorraine, where the Royal ſtandard was to be raiſed in hoſtile oppoſition to the National Aſſembly. Inflamed and enraged with this dreadful apprehenſion, another popular inſurrection, of a nature not leſs extraordinary than the former, took place, October the 6th, in which a nocturnal attack was made on the palace of Verſailles, the King, and the Queen, by whoſe fatal counſels the Monarch had been chiefly guided, made captives, and conducted to Paris, where the palace of the Tuilleries, ſecured by a ſtrong military guard, was aſſigned them for their future reſidence. The effect of this violence on the perſon of the Sovereign was an explicit and unconditional acceptance on his part of the Articles of the Conſtitution, formerly preſented; and the National Aſſembly removed their ſittings to Paris, where they were henceforth deeply occupied in executing the Herculean taſk of regenerating the whole ſyſtem of the national polity, laws and government.

Amongſt the decrees which moſt excited the admiration or aſtoniſhment of the world were thoſe

which pronounced the annihilation of all feudal privileges, the abolition of all diſtinction of orders, the reſumption of tithes and other eccleſiaſtical and monaſtic property; the diſſolution of monaſtic inſtitutions; the allotment of the kingdom into a new territorial diviſion, under the name of Departments, eighty-three in number, nearly equal in population and extent; finally, the extinction of the Provincial Parliaments, and the eſtabliſhment of Departmental Aſſemblies, of Courts of Juſtice, and the Trial by Jury in each Department. The general principles on which the government of the kingdom was modelled, were comprehended in a Declaration of Rights, drawn up with great preciſion and ability; and which may ſerve as a perpetual Charter of Liberty to mankind*.

It

* This famous DECLARATION, which well deſerves a place in the frontiſpiece of every National Code of Laws, is ſubſtantially as follows:

I. Men were born, and always continue, free and equal with reſpect to their rights. Civil diſtinctions therefore can be founded only on public utility.

II. The end of all political aſſociations is the preſervation of the natural and impreſcriptible Rights of Man. And theſe Rights are Liberty, Property, Security, and Reſiſtance to Oppreſſion.

III. The Nation is eſſentially the Source of all Sovereignty.

IV. Political Liberty conſiſts in the power of doing whatever does not injure another.

V. The Law ought only to prohibit actions hurtful to Society.

VI. The

It is no wonder that a Revolution ſo extraordinary, and which, notwithſtanding certain unhappy concomitant

VI. The Law is an expreſſion of the will of the community. All being equal in its ſight, are equally eligible to all honors, places and employments, without any other diſtinction than that created by their talents and virtues.

VII. No man ſhould be accuſed, arreſted, or held in confinement, except in caſes determined by the law, and according to the forms which it has preſcribed.

VIII. No one ought to be puniſhed but in virtue of a law promulgated before the offence.

IX. Every man is to be preſumed innocent till *conviction of guilt.*

X. No man ought to be moleſted on account of his opinions, not even his religious opinions; provided his avowal of them does not diſturb the public order.

XI. Every man may ſpeak, write, and publiſh freely—being reſponſible for the abuſes of this liberty in caſes determined by law.

XII. A public force is neceſſary only to give ſecurity to the Rights of Men and Citizens.

XIII. Public contributions ought to be divided equally among the members of the community, according to their ſeveral abilities.

XIV. Every Citizen has a right, by himſelf or his repreſentative, to a free voice in determining the neceſſity and appropriation of public contributions.

XV. Every community has a right to demand of its agents an account of their conduct.

XVI. Every community, in which the ſeparation of powers is not determined, nor a ſecurity of rights provided for, wants a Conſtitution.

XVII. The

concomitant irregularities and exceſſes, afforded ſo fair a proſpect of future and permanent happineſs, ſhould excite great exultation amongſt the Friends of Liberty in England. The firſt public demonſtration of this appeared on the occaſion of an anniverſary meeting of a Whig Aſſociation in the metropolis, known by the name of the Revolution Society, on the 5th of November, to celebrate the memory of that great Monarch by whoſe heroic interpoſition, at a criſis of imminent danger, the laws and liberties of Great Britain were, under the favoring auſpices of Heaven, ſettled on a ſolid and permanent baſis. Previous to the aſſembling of the members at the uſual place of feſtive meeting, a Sermon or Diſcourſe on "the Love of our Country" was preached to ſuch as choſe to hear, at a Chapel belonging to the Diſſenters at the Old Jewry, by the famous Dr. Price; in which the primary principles of government were ſtated in a mode which the ſanction of a century had rendered familiar in this country; and the great doctrines of Liberty inculcated with all that emphaſis and energy which characterized the pen of that diſtinguiſhed and venerable patriot. "The improvement of the world

XVII. The right to property being inviolable and ſacred, no one ought to be deprived of it, except in caſes of evident public neceſſity legally aſcertained, and upon condition of a previous and juſt indemnity.

depended,"

depended," as the preacher affirmed, "on the attention given by men to this topic. Nor will mankind be ever as virtuous and happy as they are capable of being, till the attention to it becomes univerſal and efficacious. If we forget it, we ſhall be in danger of an idolatry as groſs and ſtupid as that of the antient heathens, who, after fabricating blocks of wood or ſtone, fell down and worſhipped them." At the concluſion of this diſcourſe, in expatiating on the favorableneſs of the preſent time to all exertions in the cauſe of Liberty, he broke out into the following eloquent exclamation—"What an eventful period is this! I am thankful that I have lived to it: and I could almoſt ſay, LORD! *now letteſt thou thy ſervant depart in peace, for mine eyes have ſeen thy ſalvation.* I have lived to ſee a diffuſion of knowledge which has undermined ſuperſtition and error; I have lived to ſee the rights of men better underſtood than ever, and nations panting for liberty which ſeemed to have loſt the idea of it. I have lived to ſee thirty millions of people indignantly and reſolutely ſpurning at ſlavery, and demanding liberty with an irreſiſtible voice; their King led in triumph, and an arbitrary Monarch ſurrendering himſelf to his ſubjects.—After ſharing in the benefits of one Revolution, I have been ſpared to be a witneſs to two other Revolutions, both glorious; and now methinks I ſee the ardor for liberty catching and ſpreading, and a general

neral amendment beginning in human affairs—the dominion of Kings changed for the dominion of Laws, and the dominion of Prieſts giving way to the dominion of Reaſon and Conſcience. Be encouraged, all ye friends of freedom, and writers in its defence! The times are auſpicious. Your labors have not been in vain. Behold kingdoms, admoniſhed by you, ſtarting from ſleep, breaking their fetters, and claiming juſtice from their oppreſſors! Behold the light you have ſtruck out, after ſetting America free, reflected to France, and there kindled into a blaze, that lays deſpotiſm in aſhes, and warms and illuminates EUROPE!"

Impreſſed with theſe noble and elevated ſentiments, the Society, whoſe numbers on this occaſion far exceeded thoſe of any former anniverſary, unanimouſly reſolved, on the motion of Dr. Price, to offer in a formal addreſs "their congratulations to the National Aſſembly, on the event of the late glorious Revolution in France." This being tranſmitted by the Chairman, Lord Stanhope, to the Duke de la Rochefoucault, and laid by that diſtinguiſhed nobleman before the Aſſembly, was received with loud acclamations. "It belonged," ſaid the Duke de la Rochefoucault in his reply, "to Dr. Price, the Apoſtle of Liberty, to propoſe a motion tending to pay to Liberty the faireſt homage—that of national prejudices. In that Addreſs is ſeen the dawn of a glorious day, in which two adverſe nations

tions ſhall contract an intimate union, founded on the ſimilarity of their opinions, and their common enthuſiaſm for liberty." Alſo the Archbiſhop of Aix, Preſident of the National Aſſembly, tranſmitted to Lord Stanhope, in a manner the moſt polite and flattering, the vote of the Aſſembly, relative to the Addreſs, ſtating, "that the Aſſembly was deeply affected with this extraordinary proof of eſteem, and directing the Preſident to expreſs to the Revolution Society the lively ſenſibility with which the National Aſſembly had received an Addreſs breathing thoſe ſentiments of humanity and univerſal benevolence, that ought to unite together in all countries of the world the true friends of Liberty and the happineſs of mankind."

Such was the general ſtate of things, when the Parliament of Great Britain was convened at Weſtminſter, January the 21ſt, 1790. The King's Speech contained nothing remarkable. It ſlightly and ambiguouſly glanced on the affairs of France, in declaring "the internal ſituation of the different parts of Europe to have been productive of events which had engaged his Majeſty's moſt ſerious attention." But early indications appeared of the light in which the recent tranſactions in that kingdom were viewed by the Court. Lord Valletort, in moving the Addreſs, took occaſion to contraſt the tranquil and proſperous ſituation of England with the anarchy and licentiouſneſs of France, and

and to ſtigmatize the Revolution in that kingdom as an event the moſt diſaſtrous, and productive of conſequences the moſt fatal which had ever taken place ſince the foundation of the monarchy. This language was highly applauded by the old prerogative phalanx, diſtinguiſhed by the appellation of the King's Friends. But theſe ſentiments unfortunately were far from being confined to that inveterate and dangerous faction.

Upon the debate which took place on February the 9th, relative to the Army Eſtimates, Mr. Burke argued in favor of a reduction of the Peace Eſtabliſhment, from that ſtate of perfect ſecurity which the nation at preſent enjoyed—profeſſing that, on a review of all Europe, he did not find that politically we ſtood in the ſmalleſt degree of danger from any one ſtate or kingdom it contained, nor that any foreign powers, but our own allies, were likely to obtain a preponderance in the ſcale. "France," ſaid Mr. Burke, "has hitherto been our firſt object in all conſiderations concerning the balance of power. But France is in a political light to be conſidered as EXPUNGED out of the SYSTEM of EUROPE. Whether ſhe could EVER appear in it again, as a leading power, was not eaſy to determine: but at preſent he conſidered France as not politically exiſting; and MOST ASSUREDLY it would take MUCH TIME to reſtore her to her former ACTIVE EXISTENCE. *Gallos quoque in bellis*

floruiſſe audivimus, might poſſibly be the language of the riſing generation. It was ſaid, as ſhe had ſpeedily fallen, ſhe might ſpeedily riſe again. He doubted this. The fall from an height was with an accelerated velocity; but to liſt a weight up to that height again was difficult, and oppoſed by the laws of phyſical and political gravitation. In a political view, France was low indeed; ſhe had loſt every thing, even to her name.

——————Jacet ingens littore truncus,
Avolſumq; humeris caput, et ſine nomine corpus.

He was aſtoniſhed at it. He was alarmed at it. He trembled at the uncertainty of all human greatneſs. The French had ſhewn themſelves the ableſt architects of ruin that had hitherto appeared in the world. In one ſhort ſummer they had completely pulled down to the ground their Monarchy, their Church, their Nobility, their Law, their Army, and their Revenue. Were we abſolute conquerors, and France to lie proſtrate at our feet, we ſhould bluſh to impoſe upon them terms ſo deſtructive to all their conſequence as a nation, as the durance they had impoſed upon themſelves. In the laſt age we were in danger of being entangled by the example of France, in the net of a relentleſs deſpotiſm—a deſpotiſm indeed proudly arrayed in manners, gallantry, ſplendor, magnificence, and even covered over with the impoſing

posing robes of science and literature. Our present danger, from the example of a people whose character knows no medium, is, with regard to government, a danger from licentious violence—a danger of being led from admiration to imitation of the excesses of an unprincipled, plundering, ferocious, bloody, and tyrannical democracy—of a people whose government is anarchy, and whose religion is atheism. Mr. Burke pronounced the French nation very unwise. What they valued themselves upon was, in his opinion, a disgrace to them. They had gloried, and some people in England had thought fit to take share in that glory, in making a revolution. All the horrors and all the crimes of the anarchy which led to this revolution, which attend its progress, and which may eventually result from its establishment, pass for nothing. The French have made their way through the destruction of their country to a bad Constitution, when they were absolutely in possession of a good one. Instead of redressing grievances, and improving the fabric of their State, to which they were called by their Monarch, and sent by their country, they had rashly destroyed all the balances and counterpoises which serve to fix the State, and to give it a steady direction. These they had melted down into one incongruous ill-connected mass; and, with the most atrocious perfidy and violation of all faith among men, laid the axe to

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the root of all property, and consequently of all national prosperity, by the principles they established, and the example they set in confiscating all the possessions of the Church. They had made and recorded a sort of institute and digest of anarchy, called "A Declaration of the Rights of Man:" thus systematically destroying every hold of authority by opinion, religious or civil, on the minds of the people. By this *mad declaration* they had subverted the State, and brought on such calamities as no country, without a long war, had ever been known to suffer. Mr. Burke declared that he felt some concern that this strange thing called a Revolution in France should be compared with the glorious event commonly called the Revolution in England. In truth, the circumstances of our revolution, as it is called, and that of France, are just the reverse of each other in almost every particular, and in the whole spirit of the transaction. What we did, was in truth and substance not a revolution made, but prevented. We took solid securities; we settled doubtful questions; we corrected anomalies in our law. In the stable fundamental parts of our Constitution we made no revolution; no, nor any alteration at all. We did not impair the Monarchy. The nation kept the same ranks, the same subordinations, the same franchises, the same order in the law, the revenue, and the

magiſtracy; the ſame Lords, the ſame Commons, the ſame Corporations, the ſame Electors. The Church was not impaired. Her eſtates, her majeſty, her ſplendor, her orders and gradations continued the ſame. She was preſerved in her full efficiency, and cleared only of that intolerance which was her weakneſs and diſgrace. Was little done then becauſe a Revolution was not made in the Conſtitution? No—every thing was done; becauſe we commenced with reparation, not with ruin. Inſtead of lying in a ſort of epileptic trance, expoſed to the pity or deriſion of the world for her wild, ridiculous, convulſive movements, the State flouriſhed; Great Britain roſe above the ſtandard of her former ſelf. All the energies of the country were awakened, and a new æra of proſperity commenced, which ſtill continues, not only unimpaired, but receiving growth and improvement under the waſting hand of time."

Mr. Fox, notwithſtanding his perſonal regard and friendſhip for Mr. Burke, thought it neceſſary, in juſtice to the rectitude and dignity of his own character, to declare "his total diſſent from opinions ſo hoſtile to the general principles of liberty; and which he was grieved to hear from the lips of a man whom he loved and revered—by whoſe precepts he had been taught, by whoſe example he had been animated to engage in their defence. He vindicated the conduct of the French army in

refuſing

refuſing to act againſt their fellow-citizens, from the aſperſions of Mr. Burke, who had charged them with abetting an abominable ſedition by mutiny and deſertion—declaring that, if he could view a ſtanding military force with leſs conſtitutional jealouſy than before, it was owing to the noble ſpirit manifeſted by the French army; who, on becoming ſoldiers, had proved that they did not forfeit their character as citizens, and would not act as the mere inſtruments of a deſpot. The ſcenes of bloodſhed and cruelty that had been acted in France, no man, ſaid Mr. Fox, could hear of without lamenting. But when the grievous tyranny that the people had ſo long groaned under was conſidered, the exceſſes they had committed in their efforts to ſhake off the yoke could not excite our aſtoniſhment ſo much as our regret. And as to the contraſt which Mr. Burke had exhibited, reſpecting the mode in which the two Revolutions in England and France were conducted, it muſt be remembered, that the ſituation of the two kingdoms was totally different. In France, a free Conſtitution was to be created. In England, it wanted only to be ſecured. If the fabric of government in England ſuffered leſs alteration, it was becauſe it required leſs alteration. If a general deſtruction of the antient Conſtitution had taken place in France, it was becauſe the whole ſyſtem was radically hoſtile to liberty,

and that every part of it breathed the direful ſpirit of deſpotiſm."

Mr. Sheridan, with ſtill leſs reſerve and attention to perſonal reſpect, reprobated the political ſentiments which had been that night advanced by Mr. Burke. "The people of France," ſaid Mr. Sheridan, "it is true, have committed acts of barbarity and bloodſhed which have juſtly excited indignation and abhorrence. That deteſtation and abhorrence however are ſtill more juſtly due to the government of France prior to the Revolution; the tyranny and oppreſſion of which had deprived the people of the rights of men and of citizens, and driven them to that degree of deſperation which could alone have incited thoſe unexampled acts of cruelty and revenge which had been practiſed in the firſt agitation and violence of the effort to regain their freedom. Could it be expected, that men in their ſituation ſhould be capable of acting with the ſame moderation and the ſame attention to humanity and ſenſibility as characteriſed freemen? Were the mad outrages of a mob an adequate ground for branding the National Aſſembly with the ſtigma of being a bloody, ferocious, and tyrannical democracy? It was a libel on that illuſtrious body thus to deſcribe them. A better Conſtitution than that which actually exiſted, it is allowed that France had a right to expect. From whom were they to receive it? From

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the bounty of the Monarch at the head of his courtiers? or from the patriotiſm of Marſhal Broglio at the head of the army? From the faint and feeble cries emitted from the dark dungeons of the Baſtille? or from the influence and energy of that ſpirit which had laid the Baſtille in aſhes? The people, unhappily miſguided as they doubtleſs were in particular inſtances, had however acted rightly in their great object. They had placed the ſupreme authority of the community in thoſe hands by whom alone it could be juſtly exerciſed, and had reduced their Sovereign to the rank which properly belonged to Kings—that of adminiſtrator of the laws eſtabliſhed by the free conſent of the community." The Houſe appeared, during a long and moſt intereſting diſcuſſion, greatly agitated by this ſhock and conflict of opinions. But Mr. Pitt preſerved a cautious and politic ſilence as to the merits of the revolution which had taken place; laviſhly applauding, nevertheleſs, Mr. Burke for the zealous and ſeaſonable attachment he had diſplayed to the principles of the Britiſh Conſtitution.

The ſpirit by which the Court was now actuated ſtill more evidently appeared in their conduct relative to the Diſſenters, who had ſignalized themſelves by the exuberance of their joy at the late events in France. Since the favorable deciſion of the late ſeſſion relative to the repeal of the

Teſt Laws, they had not ceaſed their efforts by every means in their power to increaſe the number of their friends in the Houſe of Commons. Provincial meetings were convened by them in every part of the kingdom; and reſolutions, framed in terms for the moſt part harſh and revolting, paſſed, expreſſive of their ſentiments of the injuſtice and oppreſſion under which they ſuffered. And in contemplation of the approaching general election, they had even the groſs indiſcretion, in many of their public votes, to recommend a marked preference in favor of thoſe who had ſhewn themſelves the friends and advocates of equal and univerſal liberty. In the ſtead of Mr. Beaufoy, a friend and partiſan of the Miniſter, Mr. Fox was now ſolicited to move the Houſe a third time for the repeal of the acts in queſtion; to which he gave a ready and generous aſſent. By appearing to conſider the repeal of the Teſt Laws as a matter of great magnitude and importance, the Nation at large, which had originally regarded the queſtion with indifference, were led to believe it to be a matter of high and ſerious import. Counter-meetings of the Friends of the Church were called, in which the repeal of the Teſt was deprecated as fatal to its ſecurity. The Clergy revived with incredible ſucceſs the obſolete and ſenſeleſs clamor, that the CHURCH was in DANGER. All poſſible encouragement was given to theſe artifices of faction and

efforts

efforts of bigotry by the Court; ſo that when the period arrived at which the deſtined motion was to be made, the Diſſenters were aſtoniſhed to find the Government, the Church, and the Nation combined in paſſionate oppoſition to a claim which to them appeared founded on the cleareſt principles of reaſon, policy, and juſtice.

On the 2d of March Mr. Fox brought forward his motion of repeal, which, unmindful of its preſent extreme unpopularity, and fixing his attention only on the eſſential and immutable rectitude of the meaſure, he ſupported with a wonderful diſplay of ability. He ſaid, that it was to him a matter of triumph, that the very people who had imputed to him deſigns hoſtile to liberty and ſubverſive of the Conſtitution, had requeſted him to plead their cauſe on that day. This was at once a refutation and reparation of the WRONG they had done him. He ſaid, he was himſelf a member of the Eſtabliſhed Church, and thought an eſtabliſhment, if not neceſſary, at leaſt uſeful and adviſable. And ſhould any attempts be made to invade the juſt rights of the Church, ſhe ſhould find him as ready to ſtand forward the champion of thoſe rights, as he was this day to plead thoſe of the Diſſenters; and he hoped the time would come, when the Church would ſee his conduct in its true light, and acquit him of any deſign upon her ſplendor, influence, or great-

neſs. Perſecution, ſaid Mr. Fox, is a bond of union. Remove the barriers which ſeparate the Diſſenters from the community of citizens, and in their collective capacity they would be no longer known. Men unite to reſiſt oppreſſion: but ceaſe to oppreſs, and the union is diſſolved. Continue it, and you render the union ſtill more compact and firm, till reſiſtance, at firſt perhaps weak, gradually becomes formidable, and finally ſucceſsful. And experience ſhews, that when oppreſſion has been carried to certain lengths, men think that the only way to deſtroy the oppreſſion is to deſtroy the oppreſſor. Such is the tendency and ſuch the termination of this wretched ſyſtem of policy. For any Government to extend its juriſdiction over the opinions of individuals, ſaid this magnanimous ſtateſman, is at once abſurd and tyrannical. It is abſurd, for opinions muſt and ought to be free. They are not the proper objects of human authority, and they may in fact be perfectly innocent and harmleſs, when in a mere ſpeculative view they perhaps appear fraught with miſchief and danger. It is tyrannical, for it would furniſh a pretext for every ſpecies of oppreſſion and perſecution. It is not to control opinions, but actions, that government is inſtituted. And then only has the State a right to interfere, when by any overt act a man has offended againſt any known law. Then, and then only,

only, is punishment justly inflicted, when a man by his conduct has proved himself criminal; and not when it is inferred, and perhaps most unjustly inferred, from his opinions, that he may possibly become so. Such, said Mr. Fox, is the absurdity of the laws in question, that the Legislature has for many successive years regularly passed an act for indemnifying those who presume to serve their country at their own peril. To this miserable expedient are men driven, rather than repeal a law which they themselves blush to execute."

Mr. Pitt, who had done himself honor by the temper and moderation with which he had opposed the former applications, now indulged some expressions of asperity. "Neither the merits nor demerits of individuals ought, he said, to have any influence in the discussion of the present question: yet was the conduct of the Dissenters liable to just reprehension, who, at the very moment they were reprobating the Test Laws, discovered an intention of forming associations through the country for the purpose of imposing a Test upon the Members of that House, and judging of their fitness for discharging their parliamentary duty from their votes upon this single question. He was far from wishing to throw any stigma upon the Dissenters; but he affirmed it to be EXTREMELY PROBABLE, that they might exercise the power they demanded for the subversion of the present Establishment. The important

important queſtion at iſſue, he aſſerted, plainly was, whether the Houſe ought to relinquiſh at once thoſe acts which had been adopted by the wiſdom of our anceſtors to ſerve as a bulwark to the Church, whoſe conſtitution was ſo intimately connected with that of the State, that the ſafety of the one muſt be always affected by any danger that threatened the other. To toleration the Diſſenters were undoubtedly entitled. They had a right to enjoy their liberty and their property, to entertain their own ſpeculative opinions, and to educate their offspring in ſuch religious ſentiments as themſelves approved. But the indiſpenſable neceſſity of a permanent Church Eſtabliſhment for the good of the State, required that toleration ſhould not be extended to equality; if it were, there would be an end for ever to the wiſe policy of prevention, and a door would be opened to the abſolute ruin of the Conſtitution."

Mr. Burke ſeconded the Miniſter in a ſpeech of far more virulence, and in preſent circumſtances therefore of far more efficacy. He expreſſed his "utter contempt of all abſtract principles of natural right; theſe, he ſaid, were annihilated by ſociety, which ſecured the poſſeſſion of every comfort which thoſe proud and boaſtful rights impotently held out, but could not beſtow. He aſtoniſhed and alarmed the Houſe with reading ſeveral paſſages from the writings of Diſſenting Divines on the ſub-

ject of Eccleſiaſtical Eſtabliſhments, expreſſed with the uſual acrimony and violence of theological polemics. From theſe teſtimonies Mr. Burke inferred the inveterate enmity of the Diſſenters to the Church; and he adjured the Houſe to ſuffer the fatal incidents which had taken place in France, and the ſudden ruin of the Gallican Church, to awaken their zeal for the preſervation of our preſent happy and excellent Eſtabliſhment." On the diviſion the numbers were, ayes 105, noes 294; ſo that the majority againſt the repeal had increaſed ſince the laſt ſeſſion from 20 to 189 voices.

In conſequence of the unhappy manner in which this queſtion was treated, the ſpirit of religious bigotry, prejudice, and animoſity was revived throughout the kingdom in an extraordinary degree. The grand fabric of policy which it had been the labor of a century to rear, and the glory of the Houſe of Hanover for two ſucceſſive reigns to cheriſh, was now in a moment of raſhneſs and reſentment demoliſhed and overthrown. The Diſſenters on their part can by no means be acquitted of blame. Conſidering the great plauſibility which may be given by eloquent and artful men to principles the moſt abſurd and erroneous, it is no wonder that many highly reſpectable perſons, far removed from contempt as to knowledge and underſtanding, ſhould

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regard the repeal of the Teſt Laws as attended with a degree of riſque and danger *. Till the PASSIONS of the public were awakened, it is however extremely evident that the arguments of the Diſſenters, and of their advocates, both in and out of Parliament, made a ſenſible impreſſion in their favor; but when they proceeded to a rude and arrogant mode of urging their claim, the voice of reaſon was loſt in the ſubſequent conflict. Had the Diſſenters conducted themſelves with the reſpect and deference due to the Government of a country even when in error, it is by no means improbable that at a future period the Court might have

* "The ſufferings of men in their civil rights upon religious accounts," ſays Biſhop HOADLEY in his memorable anſwer to Biſhop SHERLOCK, "was the INFLAMING CONSIDERATION—and what gave riſe to thoſe paſſions which in the laſt century produced ſuch fatal effects. The contrary conduct, therefore, would have the contrary effect. Let all hardſhips and all oppreſſions ceaſe. Let there be no civil puniſhment, or civil ſuffering, or civil inconvenience, call it as you pleaſe, on account of what is the dictate of men's private conſcience, unleſs it immediately affect the Civil Government. If the former method has been tried, and has been ſeen to blow up diſaffection into violence, then the true cure for theſe evils is to prevent them by acting a contrary part, and trying that which never yet has had in any part of the world ſo fatal effects. To go on in the old way of continuing grievances and burdens, is only to pave the way to the ſame evils whenever time and opportunity ſhall offer; and this as certainly as that the ſame human nature will be worked upon in the

have *suffered* the repeal to pass; but by pressing the repeal with a boldness and precipitancy which allowed no salvo for the honor of Government, they could expect no other than a decided and acrimonious opposition. It is nevertheless very remarkable in one view, that the measure in question should be opposed with such pertinacity by the Executive Government, since the very object of the repeal was merely to remove a restraint upon the exercise of its prerogative. And if the object of these successive applications had been attained in its utmost extent, it would still have depended upon the pleasure of the Crown, whether a single

the same manner by the same methods; or as certainly as that the same causes, all things concurring, will ever produce the same effects. Those evils were begun by partiality and oppression, and therefore the true lasting effectual remedy would be for Government to abolish all partiality as to civil rights, and all hardship wherever there is equal affection to the Civil Government, properly so called. Admitting, for argument sake, the disaffection of the Dissenters to the Government at former periods, if that disaffection to the Civil Constitution, testified by former actions, were a just ground for making such exclusive acts, then certainly the truest affection to the present Civil Constitution, testified through a long series of years, and in times the most critical and dangerous, is the justest reason in the world for putting an end to these acts." Such were the noble sentiments, and such the generous and enlightened policy with which the Dissenters were not only uniformly treated, but publicly defended, by those men in whom the House of Brunswic once placed their trust and confidence.

Dissenter

Diſſenter ſhould have been employed in any office for which a compliance with the Teſt was previouſly neceſſary. The conduct of the Diſſenters, too eagerly ſolicitous to remove a ſtigma which they were conſcious they did not deſerve, muſt indeed be acknowledged unwiſe and indefenſible. But when was wiſdom ſuppoſed the characteriſtic of a promiſcuous and countleſs multitude? The conduct of Government was alſo at leaſt equally unwiſe. But from the Government of a great nation we have a right to expect wiſdom; and from the palpable want of it during the preſent reign, evils and miſchiefs beyond all power of calculation have reſulted. After the fatal experience of thirty years, that moſt important of all political truths remained to be diſcovered—that mankind are with infinitely more eaſe and efficacy to be governed by mildneſs than ſeverity.

Shortly after the deciſion of the Houſe upon this buſineſs, Mr. Flood, ſo long celebrated as a patriot and orator in the Iriſh Houſe of Commons, and who had ſat ſome years almoſt undiſtinguiſhed in the Britiſh Parliament, brought forward a plan of Parliamentary Reform, in conformity to which an additional number of Repreſentatives, to the amount of one hundred, was to be admitted into the Legiſlative Body, in a proportional ratio to the population of each county, by the election of the reſident houſeholders only. This was a bold and happy effort

effort at reform; and it was supported by the mover in a very able and eloquent speech, in which, adverting to the present state of things in France, he declared "that it was the want of timely and temperate reforms that had made a revolution necessary in that country. Those who opposed such reforms might be enemies to revolution in their hearts, but they were friends to it by their folly."

This motion was vehemently opposed by Mr. Windham, Member for Norwich, the obsequious and devoted admirer of Mr. Burke, who adopted in their full extent all his eccentricities and deviations from the rule of right, but who followed him in his superior lines of character, his genius, and his eloquence, with very unequal steps. "At the close of the American war, Mr. Windham said, a deluge of opinions had been let loose, a clamor had been raised, and a parliamentary reform demanded—as a remedy for the evils we felt from it. Happily those wild notions had long since subsided; the danger, however, was now breaking out afresh; and were he otherwise a friend to the proposition, he should have objected to it on account of the time at which it was introduced. Where was the man who would be mad enough to advise them to repair their house in the hurricane season?"

Mr. Pitt entirely coincided in these reasonings of Mr. Windham, and declared, "that were the motion before them the precise proposition he himself

ſelf had formerly offered, he ſhould now vote againſt it from a conviction of its actual impropriety. But at a more ſeaſonable opportunity he would MOST CERTAINLY again ſubmit his ideas upon the ſubject to the conſideration of the Houſe."

Mr. Fox declared, "that he ſaw no reaſon why we ſhould be ſtruck with a panic on account of the ſituation of affairs in France; and in alluſion to Mr. Windham's metaphorical argument, he affirmed, that no ſeaſon could be more proper to begin a repair than when a hurricane was near and ready to burſt forth." Mr. Flood perceiving the general ſentiments of the Houſe, even of thoſe Members who had formerly favored the idea of Parliamentary Reform, to be adverſe to the motion, at length aſſented to withdraw his propoſition.

The buſineſs relative to the abolition of the Slave Trade went on ſlowly and heavily. Every artifice of procraſtination was uſed on the part of the Slave-merchants and Planters, and the whole ſeſſion paſſed over in the hearing of evidence, and examination of witneſſes.

The trial of Mr. Haſtings alſo proceeded with almoſt equal languor. On the 16th of February (1790) the charge reſpecting preſents was recapitulated by Mr. Burke; but in the entire courſe of the ſeſſion the Court ſat only thirteen days. The enthuſiaſm of thoſe who wiſhed and expected to have ſeen a great public delinquent brought

brought to ſpeedy and exemplary juſtice, was faſt changing to compaſſion for the man who ſeemed deſtined to live a life of impeachment, and to have become the object of a relentleſs perſecution. The evidence on three articles only of the general charge out of twenty was as yet cloſed on the part of the Commons, after which Mr. Haſtings was to enter upon his defence, and the Commons were to reply; ſo that in all probability the judges and the witneſſes, the accuſers and the accuſed, would be all ſwept away by the hand of Time before the trial could arrive at its legal termination. The common ſenſe of mankind revolted at this procedure. It appeared manifeſt to all, that this was not the mode in which human affairs could or ought to be conducted. The real merits of the cauſe were loſt in the immenſity of the detail. It was not to be expected or imagined that the public at large could pretend to form any judgment reſpecting it. This only without heſitation they inferred, that if Mr. Haſtings was ſo criminal as he was repreſented, a ſhort and ſimple ſtatement of facts would ſuffice to prove his guilt. But Weſtminſter Hall was converted into a LYCEUM, a School of Eloquence, and all was ſeen confuſed and magnified through the miſt of rhetorical declamation.

The Houſe of Commons had indeed originally propoſed, that the Lords ſhould decide ſeparately upon each article, which might doubtleſs have

tended conſiderably to ſhorten the proceedings; but this their Lordſhips refuſed, as an unfair and partial mode of determining upon the merits of ſo complicated a caſe, and in which many of the articles of impeachment were ſo intimately connected. Towards the cloſe of the ſeſſion, a reſolution paſſed the Houſe of Commons, on the motion of Mr. Burke, "That the Houſe do authorize the Managers to inſiſt only upon ſuch and ſo many of the charges as may appear to them conducive to the obtaining ſpeedy and effectual juſtice;" and Major Scott was, by the order of the Houſe, reprimanded by the Speaker in his place, for aſcribing, in a certain libellous publication, the procraſtination of the trial to the ſyſtematical artifices of the Managers.

On the 31ſt of March, 1790, Mr. Dundas brought forward his annual ſtatement of the debts and revenues of the Eaſt India Company, as required by the Regulation Act. He repreſented, according to annual cuſtom, their ſituation as in the higheſt degree proſperous and flouriſhing; and what is very remarkable, he did not conclude his eulogium of the preſent year, with aſking a loan to enable them to avoid the horrors of inſolvency. Through the wiſe and equitable adminiſtration of Lord Cornwallis, the revenues of Bengal had been advanced during the laſt year without the aid of any new impoſition, from one million eight hun-

dred thouſand pounds to two millions one hundred and fifty thouſand pounds. The preſent Governor General, on his acceſſion to his high office, had ſtated the ſituation of the provinces as moſt wretched and deplorable. In his diſpatch to the Court of Directors, dated Auguſt 2, 1789, he ſays, "Independent of all other conſiderations, it will be of the utmoſt importance for promoting the ſolid intereſt of the Company, that the PRINCIPAL LANDHOLDERS and TRADERS in the interior parts of the country ſhould be *reſtored* to ſuch circumſtances as to enable them to ſupport their families with decency, according to the cuſtoms of their ſeveral *caſtes* and religions. I am ſorry to be obliged to ſay, that agriculture and internal commerce have for many years been gradually declining; and that at preſent, excepting the claſs of ſhroffs and banians, who reſide almoſt entirely in great towns, the inhabitants of theſe provinces were advancing haſtily to a general ſtate of poverty and wretchedneſs. In this deſcription I muſt include almoſt every zemindar in the Company's territories." And in his Council-minute of September 18, 1789, his Lordſhip writes, "I can ſafely aſſert, that ONE THIRD of the Company's territory is now a jungle, inhabited by WILD BEASTS!"

One of the primary and moſt important meaſures of the new Governor General was, to leaſe the lands

in perpetuity at an equitable valuation to the actual occupants; in alluſion to which momentous tranſaction his Lordſhip thus forcibly expreſſes himſelf to the Directors: "The ſecurity of property, and the certainty which each individual will NOW feel of being allowed to enjoy the fruits of his labors, muſt operate uniformly as incitements to labor and induſtry." This could not but be conſtrued as a bitter ſatire on the conduct of his predeceſſor; and as amounting to a very explicit acknowledgment of the miſery and oppreſſion which the inhabitants had long ſuffered under his capricious, haughty, and tyrannical domination.

In the month of April Mr. Pitt preſented, as uſual, his ſtatement of the national revenue and expenditure; and it was very conſolatory to the public to be informed that the receipt of the Exchequer had ſurpaſſed that of the year preceding in the ſum of half a million, and more ſo to be told that ſtill greater acceſſions might reaſonably be hoped from the uninterrupted enjoyment of the ineſtimable bleſſings of peace. It therefore excited peculiar aſtoniſhment, when in about a fortnight from this period, viz. May 5th, 1790, a Royal Meſſage was delivered by the Miniſter, announcing a ſtate of things which bore the undiſguiſed and menacing aſpect of war.

To elucidate this matter, it is neceſſary to mention that the celebrated circumnavigator COOK,

in his laſt voyage of diſcovery, touching at divers ports on the weſtern coaſt of North America, purchaſed from the natives a number of valuable furs bearing a high price in the Chineſe market. This branch of commerce proving very lucrative, a ſpot of ground was in the year 1788 procured from the Indians, and a regular eſtabliſhment, defended by a ſlight fortification, formed at a place called Nootka Sound, ſituated about the 50th degree of latitude.

This being regarded by the Spaniards as a flagrant encroachment on their excluſive rights of ſovereignty, the Princeſſa, a Spaniſh man of war diſpatched for this purpoſe by the Viceroy of Mexico, in the following ſpring, ſeized without ceremony upon the fort, and captured ſuch Engliſh veſſels, the Iphigenia, Argonaut, &c. as were found trading on the coaſt. At the ſame time the Spaniſh Commandant, hoiſting the national ſtandard, declared that the whole line of coaſt from Cape Horn to the 60th degree of latitude belonged to the King of Spain. After ſome delay, and much loſs and vexation to the proprietors, the captured veſſels were reſtored by order of the Viceroy, on the ſuppoſition, as he declared, "that nothing but ignorance of the rights of Spain could have induced the merchants in queſtion to attempt an eſtabliſhment on that coaſt."

Of theſe particulars the Court of London was

informed by the Spaniſh Ambaſſador ſo long ſince as the 10th of February; and his Excellency at the ſame time requeſted "that meaſures might be taken for preventing his Britannic Majeſty's ſubjects from frequenting thoſe coaſts, and from carrying on their fiſheries in the ſeas contiguous to the Spaniſh continent, as derogatory to the inconteſtable rights of the Crown of Spain." This was the exact counterpart of the memorable affair of Falkland Iſlands, which had ſo nearly involved Europe in a war twenty years before. The Miniſter of that day, had he continued in power, would doubtleſs have avoided ſtriking a ſecond time upon the ſame rock; but it has been obſerved, not without too much color of plauſibility, from facts like the preſent, that although individuals gain wiſdom by experience, nations do not.

The claims of Spain, in relation to her rights of dominion and ſovereignty in America, were doubtleſs in the higheſt degree chimerical, and could perhaps be equalled in extravagance only by the claims of Great Britain. By the treaty of 1763 the river Miſſiſſippi, flowing from north to ſouth in a direct courſe of 1500 miles, was made the perpetual boundary of the two empires; and the whole country to the weſt of that vaſt river belonged to his Catholic Majeſty, by juſt as valid a tenure as the country eaſtward of the river to the King of England. Excluſive of this recent and deciſive

line

line of demarcation, by which the relative and political rights of both nations were clearly aſcertained, the Spaniſh Court referred to antient treaties, by which the rights of the Crown of Spain were acknowledged in their full extent by Great Britain.

Charles III. King of Spain died December 1788, and his ſon Charles IV. the preſent Sovereign, confiding in the juſtice of his claims, offered with dignified candor to ſubmit the deciſion of this queſtion to any one of the Kings of Europe, leaving the choice wholly to his Britannic Majeſty. "It is ſufficient (ſays the Spaniſh Miniſter, Count Florida Blanca) for the Spaniſh Monarch, that a Crowned Head, from full information of the facts, ſhall decide as he thinks juſt; adding, that on a late application to the Court of St. Peterſburgh, in relation to ſimilar encroachments on the part of the Ruſſians, the Empreſs had given the moſt poſitive orders that no ſettlement ſhould be formed on that line of coaſt. As to the non-occupancy of the particular ſpot in queſtion by the Spaniards, the Court of Madrid juſtly obſerved, that ſuch a plea, if admitted, would tend, by the incongruous intermixture of ſettlements, to the utter annihilation of all definite and permanent boundaries."

The reply of the Court of London to the Memorial of the Spaniſh Ambaſſador was high and haughty. "The act of violence mentioned in the Memorial, neceſſarily ſuſpended any diſcuſſion

till an adequate atonement had been made for a proceeding ſo injurious to Great Britain."

On the ſtatement of theſe facts in the Royal Meſſage, the Houſe unanimouſly joined in an Addreſs to the King, aſſuring his Majeſty of the determination of his faithful Commons to afford his Majeſty the moſt zealous and affectionate ſupport in ſuch meaſures as may become requiſite for maintaining the dignity of his Majeſty's Crown and the eſſential intereſts of his dominions." A vote of credit paſſed the Houſe for the ſum of one million; and vigorous military and naval preparations were made in both kingdoms, in the contemplation of an immediate declaration of war.

It muſt be acknowledged that the hoſtile procedure of Spain had reduced the Engliſh Miniſtry to a difficult dilemma. The value of the ſettlement at Nootka, in a commercial and national view, was beneath all calculation of inſignificance; and it argued culpable inattention in the Britiſh Miniſters, not to have been better and earlier appriſed of the extent of the real or imaginary rights of Spain, whoſe jealouſy at the ſlighteſt infringement upon thoſe rights was ſufficiently notorious. This extreme irritability was the more pardonable, as Spain had ever with the ſtricteſt honor abſtained from all violations of the ſimilar claims and pretenſions of other countries. A moment's reflection muſt have evinced, that a Britiſh ſettlement

ment on the coaſt of California muſt be eventually productive of a ſerious contention with the Court of Madrid: and a ſlight degree of diſcretion would have ſufficed to obviate this ground of national quarrel. But in conſequence of the raſh ſtep taken by Spain, the NATIONAL HONOR was now at ſtake: and Mr. Grey, in moving for papers relative to this tranſaction, juſtly obſerved, "that national honor was not, as ſome repreſented it, a viſionary thing; a nation without honor was a nation without power. In loſing this ineſtimable attribute, it inevitably loſt the genuine ſpring of its ſpirit, energy and action. Every nation therefore ought to be careful of its honor; to be careful leſt by one mean ſubmiſſion it encouraged an attack upon the dignity of its character—that beſt ſecurity for the preſervation of its peace."

Theſe high and elevated ſentiments, ſuggeſted by the generous ardor of youth, Mr. Burke's long and eventful experience ſeemed to regard as ſuſceptible nevertheleſs of ſome modification. "He hoped that the national honor would not be found incompatible with the means of amicable accommodation. As we never ought to go to war for a profitable wrong, ſo we ought never to go to war for an unprofitable right. He therefore truſted that the intended armament would be conſidered

not

not as a meaſure calculated to terminate the war happily, but to carry on the negotiation vigorouſly. He wiſhed the war might be avoided. He had ſeen three wars, and we were gainers by none of them. Our ability and reſources were doubtleſs great; but *then* did a country prove her magnanimity moſt clearly, when ſhe manifeſted her moderation to be proportionate to her power. What indeed had we to contend for? If all the diſtant territories of Spain were thrown into the ſcale of England, we ſhould, like Spain, be only the weaker for our acquiſitions."

On the 10th of June, 1790, the King terminated the ſeſſion, and in his ſpeech ſignified the probability of a ſpeedy diſſolution of the preſent Parliament; aſſuring them in handſome terms of "the deep and grateful ſenſe which he entertained of that affectionate and unſhaken loyalty, that uniform and zealous regard for the true principles of the Conſtitution, that unremitted attention to the public happineſs and proſperity, which had invariably directed all their proceedings;" and on the day following the Parliament was diſſolved by proclamation.

Conſcious of her inability to contend alone with the power of England, Spain had in an early ſtage of the negotiation applied to the Court of France, to know how far ſhe could depend, in preſent circumſtances,

cumſtances, upon the fulfilment of the conditions of the Family Compact in caſe of a rupture with Great Britain.

From the period of the King's compulſive removal to Paris, no ſymptoms of oppoſition to the will of the nation had appeared; and by ſeeming cheerfully to acquieſce in the ſucceſſive decrees of the Aſſembly, he had in ſome meaſure recovered what of all things is moſt difficult to regain—LOST CONFIDENCE. "Let us," ſaid the Monarch, in a ſpeech delivered on a ſolemn occaſion to the Aſſembly (February 1790), "give ourſelves up with good faith to the hopes that we ought to conceive. Continue your labors. Let it be known that your Monarch applauds them. I ſhould have many loſſes to recount, but I find my happineſs in that of the nation. From the bottom of my heart do I expreſs this ſentiment. I will maintain the Conſtitution with my whole power. May this day, in which your Monarch comes to re-unite himſelf to you, effect in like manner the re-union of all!"

In the plan of the new Conſtitution, though much was detracted from the prerogative of the Monarch, much was retained: and the authority of the King of France was ſtill amply ſufficient for the real purpoſes of government. He was acknowledged as the ſole depoſitary of the executive power—as the ſupreme head of the general adminiſtration

niſtration of the kingdom. In virtue of his ſanction, the acts of the Legiſlative Body acquired the force of law. He was conſtituted not the nominal merely, but efficient Chief of the army and of the navy. The external ſafety of the State, and the conſervation of its rights and privileges in relation to foreign powers, were confided to him. He diſpoſed at his pleaſure of the great offices of State. He appointed, recalled, and received Ambaſſadors, and he was the grand medium of intercourſe with foreign nations. He was addreſſed by the auguſt titles of SIRE and MAJESTY; and to maintain the dignity and ſplendor of the Crown, he had a Civil Liſt revenue of one million two hundred and fifty thouſand pounds per annum. Where then, after all the ſenſeleſs clamors of the enemies of this Revolution, was as yet the mighty injury the Monarch had ſuſtained? That the Conſtitution itſelf, like all other human things, was not free from imperfection, may without difficulty be admitted; but the ſubſequent misfortunes of France originated from cauſes which bore no analogy to thoſe defects. They were owing not to the Conſtitution, whether well or ill conſtructed, but to the oppoſition made to its eſtabliſhment.

The Count de Montmorin having laid, by order of the King, the Memorial of the Spaniſh Court before the Aſſembly, this gave riſe to a very intereſting

eſting Report from the Diplomatic Committee, preſented to the Aſſembly by the Count de Mirabeau. With ſome heſitation, and many high compliments to the Engliſh nation, the Report comes at length to the concluſion, " that it would not be juſt or honorable to annul the ſolemn engagements ſubſiſting between Spain and France, at an inſtant when Spain is threatened with the ſame dangers which ſhe had repeatedly warded off from them." An ardent wiſh for the eſtabliſhment of permanent peace and cordial amity with England is notwithſtanding the predominant ſentiment in this celebrated Report. " Perhaps, ſay they, the moment is approaching when LIBERTY, triumphant in both hemiſpheres, ſhall accompliſh the wiſh of philoſophy, by delivering the human ſpecies from the neceſſity of war. What is it but an inſidious ſyſtem of politics that has hitherto repreſented as our rival a nation whoſe ſteps we have followed, whoſe brilliant example has been a light to direct us in the attainment of our liberties, and with whom ſo many new motives lead us to cultivate a good underſtanding?"

Notwithſtanding the vote of the National Aſſembly for an immediate augmentation of the naval force, the Court of Madrid plainly ſaw the reluctance of the French nation to engage in a war with England; and, yielding to neceſſity, complied firſt with the harſh demand of previous reſtitution

and

and indemnification; and at length, on the 2d of October (1790) a Convention was ſigned at the Eſcurial, by which every point in diſpute was conceded by Spain. The ſettlement at Nootka was reſtored; the free navigation and right of fiſhery in the Southern Pacific were confirmed to Britain; a full liberty of trade was granted to all the north-weſt coaſts of America, beyond the moſt northerly of the Spaniſh ſettlements, unaccompanied, however, by any formal renunciation of their right of ſovereignty. And the two powers were, on the other hand, equally reſtrained from attempting any ſettlement nearer to Cape Horn than the moſt ſoutherly of the ſettlements actually formed by Spain. A very wiſe article was inſerted likewiſe in this treaty: That in all future caſes of complaint, or ſuppoſed infraction of the preſent Convention, no act of violence ſhall be committed, but an exact report ſhall be made of the affair to the reſpective Courts, who will terminate ſuch difference amicably.

Thus ended a diſpute frivolous in its origin, but which ſeemed in its progreſs to threaten very ſerious conſequences, and which coſt Great Britain the ſum of three millions in warlike preparations; though this expence might have been, with great advantage to the general intereſts of mankind, avoided, by ſubmitting the whole of the diſpute, in the mode propoſed by Spain, to amicable arbitration.

tration. And ſo inſignificant was the object in conteſt, that no one either in or out of Parliament has, ſo far as appears, thought it worth while to enquire whether reſtoration has really been made in the mode preſcribed by the treaty or not.

The ANNIVERSARY of the REVOLUTION in France, which was dated from the fall of the Baſtille (July 14), was celebrated throughout the country, and more eſpecially at Paris, with great magnificence. The King aſſiſted in perſon, and took a ſolemn oath to maintain the Conſtitution. The National Aſſembly and the armed Citizens repeated it amidſt the acclamations of innumerable ſpectators; and the whole kingdom, with one voice, and almoſt at the ſame moment, ſwore to live free or die. In the genuine ſpirit of antient Greece, was raiſed on the ſite of the Baſtille a ſuperb column ſacred to Liberty; and in the Grecian ſpirit of citizenſhip and equality, a Decree of the Aſſembly had recently paſſed, aboliſhing all artificial diſtinctions of rank—all the Gothic inſtitutions of Chivalry and Knighthood, ribbands, croſſes, armorial bearings, and hereditary titles of honor*.

In

* After the reduction of the citadel of Syracuſe by Timoleon, that great man did not, as we are told, ſpare the place on account of its beauty and magnificence: but, on the contrary, he invited the Syracuſans by public proclamation to join in the deſtruction

In ENGLAND alſo the French Revolution was commemorated in the metropolis, and various other parts, with great feſtivity and the moſt cordial gratulation; the characteriſtic generoſity of the people of England diſplaying itſelf upon this occaſion in a manner very conſpicuous and pleaſing.

Soon after this tranſaction, Mr. Burke, who had in the laſt ſeſſion uttered ſo furious an invective againſt the French Revolution in the Houſe of Commons, ſtill more tranſported with rage and rancor at the high degree of proſperity it had now attained, publiſhed a book entitled "Reflections on the French Revolution," written with a force

deſtruction of that bulwark of deſpotiſm: and, the building being levelled with the ground, he erected a COMMON HALL there for the ſeat of judicature, at once to gratify the citizens and to ſhew that a popular government ſhould be elevated on the ruins of tyranny. When, after thus glorioufly re-eſtabliſhing the liberty of Sicily, an envious and factious Demagogue preferred a public accuſation againſt him in the Aſſembly of the People, who could not ſuppreſs the emotions of their indignation; he immediately ſtilled the tumult by declaring "that he had voluntarily undergone ſo many labors and dangers, that the meaneſt Syracuſan might have recourſe when he pleaſed to the laws:" adding, "that he could not ſufficiently expreſs his gratitude to the GODS, in permitting him to ſee all the Syracuſans enjoy the liberty of ſaying what they thought fit." Let the admirers of ſuch diſtinctions declare, what TITLE could add dignity to the name of TIMOLEON.

of eloquence and energy of declamation calculated to produce the moſt powerful effects.

The object of this elaborate treatiſe was twofold: 1. To expoſe to the public reſentment and indignation thoſe perſons who had in this country manifeſted their approbation of the Revolution in France; and, 2. To place that Revolution itſelf in an odious and abominable light, as an event to be deplored, deteſted, and deprecated. And, in an Appendix to this work, he with moſt atrocious and unexampled malignity invites and exhorts all Chriſtian Princes to make what he ſtyles "a common cauſe with a juſt Prince dethroned by rebels and traitors." The deluded people of France, to be reſcued from the evils they had brought upon themſelves, muſt, as he affirmed, be SUBDUED. And he intimates that this war, or cruſade, is to be conducted on principles different from any former one. "The mode of civilized war," ſays he, "will not be practiſed; they muſt look for no modified hoſtility; all which is not battle will be MILITARY EXECUTION." The members of the Revolution Society, and the other commemorators of the French Revolution, he inveighs againſt in terms of the moſt unqualified abuſe; and he charges Dr. Price in particular with having *fulminated*, in his Revolution Sermon, principles little ſhort of treaſon and rebellion. "His doctrines," ſays Mr. Burke, "affect our Conſtitution in its vital parts. He

affirms that his Majeſty is almoſt the only lawful King in the world, becauſe the only one who owes his crown to the choice of his people. As to the Kings of the world, all of whom, *except* ONE, this Arch-pontiff of the Rights of Men, with all the plenitude, and with more than the boldneſs, of the papal depoſing power in its meridian fervor of the twelfth century, puts into one ſweeping clauſe of *ban and anathema*, and proclaims uſurpers by circles of longitude and latitude over the whole globe, it behoves them to conſider how they admit into their territories theſe Apoſtolic Miſſionaries, who are to tell their ſubjects they are not lawful Kings. Nothing can be more untrue, than that the crown of this realm is held by his Majeſty by the choice of the people. Whilſt the legal conditions of the COMPACT of SOVEREIGNTY are performed, he holds his crown, as Mr. Burke virtually affirms, in CONTEMPT of their choice*:" *i. e.* according to this novel and extraordinary mode of reaſoning, in conforming his conduct to the conditions of the national choice, he reigns in actual contempt of their choice. Dr. Price having aſſerted the abſtract right of the People, as exemplified at the

* The words of Mr. Burke are literally "the choice of the Revolution Society." But if his Majeſty reigns in contempt of the choice of one part of the people, he reigns doubtleſs, by a parity of reaſon, in contempt of every part.

Revolution,

Revolution, to depoſe their Governors for miſconduct, and frame a Government for themſelves; Mr. Burke ſays, "the people of England utterly diſclaim it; they will reſiſt the practical aſſertion of it with their lives and fortunes." But *how* the people can, in any given or poſſible circumſtances, *reſiſt their own act*, is a paradox which Mr. Burke attempts not to ſolve. Certain it is that Dr. Price advanced, in this famous diſcourſe, no other principles than thoſe which Mr. LOCKE had urged a hundred years before in defence of the title of King William and the validity of the Revolution Government. Amongſt innumerable paſſages to the ſame purport, a ſingle citation may well ſuffice in vindication of a doctrine reſting on the immovable foundation of common ſenſe. "Though in a conſtituted Commonwealth," ſays that immortal writer, "ſtanding upon its own baſis, and acting according to its own nature, that is, acting for the preſervation of the Community, there can be but one Supreme Power, which is the Legiſlative, to which all the reſt are and muſt be ſubordinate; yet the Legiſlative being only a FIDUCIARY POWER, to act for certain ends, there remains ſtill in the People a ſupreme power to remove or alter the Legiſlative, when they find the Legiſlative act contrary to the truſt repoſed in them. For all power given with truſt for the attaining an end, being limited by that end, whenever that end is manifeſtly

neglected or oppoſed, the truſt muſt neceſſarily be *forfeited*, and the power devolve into the hands of thoſe that gave it, who may place it anew where they ſhall think beſt for their ſafety and ſecurity. And thus the Community perpetually retains a ſupreme power of ſaving themſelves from the attempts and deſigns even of their Legiſlators, whenever they ſhall be ſo fooliſh or ſo wicked as to lay and carry on deſigns againſt the liberties and properties of the ſubject. If they who ſay this hypotheſis lays a foundation for rebellion, mean that it *may* occaſion civil wars or inteſtine broils, to tell the people that they are abſolved from obedience when illegal attempts are made upon their liberties and properties, they may as well ſay, upon the ſame ground, that honeſt men may not oppoſe robbers or pirates, becauſe this may occaſion diſorder or bloodſhed. I deſire it may be conſidered what kind of peace there will be in the world, which is to be maintained only for the benefit of robbers and oppreſſors. Polyphemus's den gives us a perfect pattern of ſuch a peace; ſuch a government, wherein Ulyſſes and his companions had nothing to do but quietly to ſuffer themſelves to be devoured. Are the people to be blamed if they have the ſenſe of rational creatures, and can think of things no otherwiſe than as they find and feel them? And is it not rather their fault, who put things in ſuch a poſture, that they would not have them

them thought as they are? But whether the mischief hath oftener begun in the people's wantonness or in the rulers' insolence, I leave to impartial history to determine."

From the date of the fatal publication of Mr. Burke, who seemed ambitious to signalize himself by setting not merely a palace or a temple, but the world itself on fire, the nation was divided into two violent and openly hostile parties. The Tory faction, which had hitherto scarcely dared to whisper their dislike—now, under the sanction of Mr. Burke's authority, became bold and clamorous in their vociferations. And the principles advanced by Mr. Burke, ever grateful to the ear of Princes, at once obliterated all past offences, and placed him in the foremost rank of favorites and courtiers. This extraordinary production gave rise to numberless replies, of which by far the most memorable was that written by Thomas Paine, the author of the famous pamphlet styled COMMON SENSE, which by its almost magical effect on the minds of the people of America, at a most important crisis, paved the way for the declaration of independency. His present work, RIGHTS OF MAN, was written with no less power of intellect and force of language; and made a correspondent, perhaps an indelible, impression upon the public mind. Not content with pointing out and exposing with the most sarcastic severity the absurdities and misrepre-

ſentations of Mr. Burke—not content with painting in juſt and ſtriking colors the abuſes and corruptions of the exiſting government, he with daring and unhallowed hand attacked the principles of the Conſtitution itſelf—deſcribing it in terms the moſt indecent as radically vicious and tyrannical; and reprobating the introduction of ariſtocracy or monarchy, under whatever modifications, into any form of government, as a flagrant uſurpation and invaſion of the unalienable rights of man. "When we ſurvey," ſays this temerarious writer, "the wretched conditions of man under the monarchical and hereditary ſyſtems of government, dragged from his home by one power, or driven by another, and impoveriſhed by taxes more than by enemies, it becomes evident that thoſe ſyſtems are bad, and that a GENERAL REVOLUTION in the principle and conſtruction of governments is neceſſary."

This pamphlet unfortunately appearing at a time when a large proportion of the community, and thoſe the moſt zealouſly attached to liberty, were from cauſes already ſpecified in a ſtate of great irritation and diſcontent; and the book, notwithſtanding its abſurd and miſchievous political poſitions, being written in a ſtyle and manner which "came home to men's buſineſs and boſoms," innumerable converts were made to its general ſyſtem, and infinite pains were taken to circulate it amongſt the

the body of the people *. Political Aſſociations were alſo inſtituted in every part of the kingdom, profeſſing

* A few detached quotations from this famous publication may ſerve as ſpecimens to gratify curioſity, of the wonder-working power with which it cannot be denied to have been written. "The countries of the old world have been long haraſſed by the quarrels and intrigues of their Governments. Age after age has rolled away for no other purpoſe than to behold their wretchedneſs. Invention is continually exerciſed to furniſh new pretences for revenue and taxation. It watches proſperity as its prey. All monarchical governments are military. War is their trade, and plunder their object—wearied with human butchery, they ſit down to reſt, and call it peace.—If we would delineate human nature with a baſeneſs of heart and hypocriſy of countenance that reflection would ſhudder at, and humanity diſown, it is Kings, Courts, and Cabinets, that muſt ſit for the portrait. War is the pharo-table of Governments, and Nations the dupes of the game.—Government on the old ſyſtem is an aſſumption of power for the aggrandizement of itſelf—on the new, a delegation of power for the common benefit of ſociety. Monarchy is the maſter-fraud which ſhelters all others. By admitting a participation of the ſpoil, it makes itſelf friends; and when it ceaſes to do this, it will ceaſe to be the idol of courtiers. There is a morning of reaſon riſing upon man on the ſubject of government, that has not appeared before. The trade of Courts is beginning to be underſtood; and the affectation of myſtery, with all the artificial ſorcery by which they impoſed upon mankind, is on the decline. It has received its death-wound; and though it may linger, it will expire. No queſtion has ariſen within the records of hiſtory that preſſes with the importance of the preſent. It is not whether this or that party ſhall be in or out, or Whig or Tory, or High or Low Church ſhall prevail; but whether man ſhall inherit his rights, and univerſal civilization ſhall take place.—When it ſhall

profeſſing to have in view the Reform of the Conſtitution, but which with too much reaſon were ſuſpected really to aim at its ſubverſion. Such were the lamentable conſequences reſulting from the raſhneſs and folly of Mr. Burke—whoſe boaſted *panacea* operated upon the body-politic as a moſt deadly poiſon; and which ſerved to prove that learning, parts, and eloquence may ſubſiſt in the higheſt perfection, without being accompanied with a ſingle particle of wiſdom.

The new Parliament aſſembled on the 25th of November, 1790. In his opening ſpeech, the King ſignified "his ſatisfaction that the differences with Spain were brought to an amicable termination. He obſerved, that ſince the laſt Seſſion of Parliament a foundation had been laid for a pacification between Auſtria and the Porte—that a ſeparate peace had actually taken place between Ruſſia and Sweden; but that the war between Ruſſia and the Porte ſtill continued. The principles on which I have hitherto acted," ſaid the Monarch, "will make me always deſirous of employ-

be ſaid in any country in the world, My poor are happy, neither ignorance nor diſtreſs is to be found amongſt them—my gaols are empty of priſoners, my ſtreets of beggars—the aged are not in want, the taxes are not oppreſſive—the rational world is my friend, becauſe I am the friend of its happineſs—when theſe things can be ſaid, then may that country boaſt its Conſtitution and Government."

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ing the weight and influence of this country in contributing to the reſtoration of general tranquillity."

The terms of the Convention with Spain were approved and ratified in both Houſes by great majorities—but not unanimouſly. For the papers and documents relative to the negotiation being partially with-held, Mr. Grey moved an adjournment, declaring "that without them it was impoſſible to know whether the late diſputes were owing to the reſtleſs ambition and unjuſt claims of Spain, or to the raſhneſs, preſumption and ignorance of his Majeſty's Miniſters." In the Upper Houſe, the Marquis of Lanſdowne expreſſed his "determination not to join in a vote of approbation of the conduct of Miniſters, who had permitted a ſet of unknown adventurers to fit out ſhips with *fine names*, and under Portugueſe colors and papers to break through a ſyſtem regarding Spaniſh America, which had been ſanctioned by the policy of Europe for more than 200 years."

To defray the expence of the Armament, Mr. Pitt, with the laudable reſolution to ſuffer no permanent increaſe of debt, propoſed various temporary taxes, which would diſcharge the incumbrance in four years—with the aſſiſtance of five hundred thouſand pounds, which he had it in contemplation to take from the *unclaimed dividends* lying in the Bank of England, the amount of which he eſtimated

mated at ſix hundred and ſixty thouſand pounds. This latter propoſition excited a juſt alarm in all the great chartered companies, and in the commercial and mercantile world in general. It was ſtrongly and ably oppoſed in the Houſe by Mr. Fox, Mr. Thornton a Bank Director, and Mr. Samuel Whitbread, recently returned as Member for the Borough of Bedford—a young man of great perſonal and mental accompliſhments, of a diſpoſition open, noble, and ingenuous; and whoſe ardor of mind, bordering on the enthuſiaſm of public virtue, was happily regulated by an excellent underſtanding and correct judgment. It was urged, "that agreeably to the terms of the original contract between the Government and the public creditors, the Directors of the Bank are conſtituted truſtees for the public creditor. When the money is once paid into the Bank, it ceaſes to be public money, and is inſtantly converted into private property; which muſt there remain a ſacred depoſit till it is claimed by the private individuals to whom it appertains. And even in caſe of the expiration of the Charter of the Bank of England, the Directors ſtill remain a Corporation by law, for the expreſs purpoſe of executing their delegated truſt. What miſchief may not reſult from the admiſſion of a power in Government arbitrarily to depart from the conditions of the contract actually made with the public? Under the very term *unclaimed*

dividends, is indeed veiled a groſs fallacy. Excluſive of the dividends of the laſt three years, which are not properly *unclaimed* but merely *unreceived* dividends, the balance amounts ſcarcely to a fifth part of the ſum which the Miniſter propoſes to ſeize. If the recent and fluctuating balances of the Bank are thus liable to ſeizure, the Miniſter may one day order the money to be paid into the Bank, and the next he may without any violation of public faith command it to be repaid into the Exchequer. But in fact this is no other than a meaſure of injuſtice and violence, calculated to compel the Bank to relinquiſh their truſt when the original and expreſs purpoſes of it are evidently unaccompliſhed."

After much heſitation and conteſt, the Miniſter conſented, by way of compromiſe, to accept of a loan of five hundred thouſand pounds from the Bank, without intereſt, ſo long as a floating balance to that amount ſhould remain in the hands of the caſhier.

On the 17th of December (1790) Mr. Burke moved, "that the Houſe do reſolve itſelf into a Committee, to take into conſideration the ſtate of the Impeachment of Warren Haſtings, Eſq." This being done, he made a ſecond motion, "that an Impeachment by this Houſe, in the name of the Commons of Great Britain, againſt Warren Haſtings, Eſq. for high crimes and miſdemeanors, is ſtill pending." From this propoſition, the entire corps of Lawyers in the Houſe

Houſe with ſcarcely an exception declared their total diſſent: and Mr. Erſkine, whoſe talents at the Bar were of the higheſt rank, and who had in the general tenor of his practice diſtinguiſhed himelf by his zealous attachment to the principles of the Conſtitution, in an elaborate ſpeech endeavored to ſhew that in conſequence of the diſſolution of Parliament the Impeachment had *abated*; and on this ground he was ſupported by Mr. Hardinge, Mr. Mitford, and Sir John Scott.

Upon this great queſtion, in the deciſion of which the honor, the dignity, and authority of the Houſe were ſo deeply involved, the Speaker with great propriety roſe to deliver his opinion. "If the maxim laid down by the Lawyers were admitted as juſ, the conſequence was obvious. The Impeachment of a profligate or corrupt Miniſter might, by the inſidious intervention of the prerogative, a any time be rendered nugatory and abortive. In the view of the Conſtitution, and even by the forms of Parliament, the Impeachment is preferred not by the Houſe of Commons merely, but by all the Commons of England; and the Houſe can be conſidered in relation to the proſecution as no more than the agents and attornies of the people at large. A ſecond Houſe of Commons therefore, though certainly poſſeſſing a diſcretionary power of dropping the proſecution, if upon due conſideration they are of opinion that it does not reſt

upon

upon a juſt foundation, are as certainly at full liberty to proceed in it, if in their judgment conducive to the ſafety or the intereſts of the State. In an Impeachment of the nature of the preſent, it would ſcarcely be imagined that twenty-two complex articles could by any mode of inveſtigation be decided upon in a ſingle ſeſſion. If then, agreeably to the genius of the antient Conſtitution, Parliaments themſelves were to be made annual, the labor would be truly Syſiphean; as ſuch a trial *never* could arrive at a legal termination. Such were the plain dictates of common ſenſe; but in reſorting to rules of law, and precedents of Parliament, doubts and difficulties preſented themſelves. Upon thoſe remote and obſcure precedents which occurred previous to the Civil Wars of the laſt century little ſtreſs was laid: but during the reign of King Charles II. the queſtion had come repeatedly under the formal and regular diſcuſſion of both Houſes. Theſe precedents, and ſuch as had ſince occurred, the Speaker had accurately examined; and in his Report of them upon this occaſion commented upon with great judgment and ability. In the famous caſe of Lord Danby (A. D. 1679), the Parliament was unqueſtionably diſſolved, for the purpoſe of ſcreening the Miniſter from the effects of the Impeachment then actually pending againſt him. But the next Parliament underſtood their privileges too well to make the ſlighteſt

ſlighteſt conceſſion on this important conſtitutional point. And in compliance with the claims of the Commons, the Houſe of Peers, March 19th, 1678-9, RESOLVED, 'that the diſſolution of the laſt Parliament doth not alter the ſtate of the Impeachments (viz. that of the Earl of Danby, and the Lords accuſed as parties in the Popiſh Plot) brought up by the Commons in that Parliament.' In conformity to this deciſion, the trial of the Earl of Danby was continued in no leſs than four ſucceſſive Parliaments, till in February 1683-4, no Parliament being then ſitting, or likely to ſit, his Lordſhip was bailed by authority of the Court of King's Bench.

"On the 19th of May 1685, the firſt and only Parliament of King James II. was convened; and the queſtion coming immediately before them, reſpecting the validity of the proceedings on the late Impeachment, it was almoſt unanimouſly determined, that the reſolution of March 1679 * be reverſed

* In the conference between the two Houſes, which preceded and gave riſe to this famous reſolution, Serjeant Maynard, one of the Managers of the Impeachment, ſaid, "That which is moſt inſiſted upon is, that the charge now made againſt this Lord was preſented in another Parliament. It is true. But under favor, what is once upon record in Parliament *may* at any time afterwards be proceeded upon. I conceive it *hath* been done. However, in a caſe of this nature—if there were not, I hope you would

reverſed and annulled; and Lord Danby and the other Lords were diſcharged from their recognizances. But it being evidently the province of the Peers in their judicial capacity *jus dicere* and not *jus dare*, the reverſal of the Declaratory Reſolution of 1679 was regarded by the Commons as of no weight or authority whatever. In the ſecond Parliament convened after the Revolution, an order was made by the Lords, April 1690, to take into conſideration, whether Impeachments continue from Parliament to Parliament; but the Houſe adjourned the deciſion of this queſtion from time to time till the Parliament was prorogued. And on their next meeting, October 1690, the Earls of Peterborough and Saliſbury, impeached by the preceding Parliament, were diſcharged from their bail; but whether in virtue of the Act of free and general pardon that had recently paſſed, or of the Reſolution of May 1685, is not expreſſed.

"In 1695, the Earl of Danby, now Duke of Leeds, was a ſecond time impeached, on grounds totally diſtinct from the former: and this Impeachment, notwithſtanding the reverſal of 1685, continued pending under ſeveral ſucceſſive Parlia-

would MAKE A PRECEDENT." In the caſe of Lord Stafford, who urged in arreſt of judgment, that his Impeachment was pending in three different Parliaments, the Houſe refuſed, as a point already determined, to hear the arguments of Counſel upon it.

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ments, though for the moſt part in an almoſt dormant ſtate, for no leſs than ſix years; till on the 24th of June, 1701, the Houſe of Lords reſolved, 'That articles having been exhibited againſt the Duke of Leeds, to which he had anſwered, and the *Commons not proſecuting*, the Impeachment and Articles ſhould be diſmiſſed.'

"On the 1ſt of April 1701, the Earls of Portland and Orford and the Lords Somers and Haliſax were impeached: but the Commons refuſing to exhibit articles againſt them in the mode preſcribed by the Peers, theſe Impeachments were on the laſt day of the ſeſſion diſmiſſed.

"The next Parliament, which met December 1701, it is true, took no ſteps whatever to revive the Impeachments; not that they admitted the principle of abatement by diſſolution, but that, being of a political complexion totally different from the preceding Parliament, they, with a great majority of the people of England, conſidered the public conduct of theſe great WHIG LORDS not only as innocent, but in the higheſt degree meritorious.

"In July 1715, the Earl of Oxford was impeached. In June 1716, the Parliament was prorogued; and on their ſubſequent meeting, February 1717, the Earl petitioning that his impriſonment might not be indefinite, a Committee was appointed by the Houſe to ſearch for and report ſuch precedents

dents as relate to the continuance of Impeachments from ſeſſion to ſeſſion, and from parliament to parliament; which report being read, it was moved to reſolve, 'That the Impeachment of the Commons againſt the Earl of Oxford is determined by the intervening prorogation.' This was negatived on the diviſion by 87 to 45 Lords. But a proteſt enſued ſigned by ten Lords, in which the general propoſition is aſſumed, that a diſſolution would determine the Impeachment; and their Lordſhips affirm, that there is no eſſential difference in law between a prorogation and diſſolution. If ſo, the inference ſurely is, that the 87 Lords would have decided ſimilarly in the caſe of diſſolution. It deſerves ſpecific notice, that Lord Chief Juſtice Holt, that great authority on all points of conſtitutional law, in the caſe of Peters and Benning, 13th William III. publicly delivered it as his opinion, notwithſtanding the exiſting Reſolution of 1685, that Impeachments begun in one parliament might be proſecuted in another. And this appears to have been at all times the prevailing opinion of the WHIGS. Upon a general review of theſe facts and precedents, the Speaker gave it as his deliberate and decided judgment, that the Impeachment was ſtill legally pending; and that the Reſolution of 1685, paſſed, as there was reaſon to believe, by the corrupt influence of the Court, and in defiance of a ſolemn prior deciſion of both

Houſes, and which in no inſtance ſince the Revolution had been formally and avowedly acted upon, was wholly invalid and nugatory."

In this opinion Mr. Pitt, Mr. Fox, and the moſt eminent parliamentary authorities on both ſides concurred. The motion of Mr. Erſkine for a *ſearch* into precedents was negatived by a majority of 143 to 30 voices; and the original motion of Mr. Burke triumphantly carried without a diviſion.

After a ſhort interval, Mr. Burke made a third motion, "that the Managers be inſtructed to proceed to no other parts of the Impeachment, excepting ſuch as relate to contracts, penſions, and allowances;" which was carried with trivial oppoſition.

By the reſolution of the 23d of December 1790, the Lords found themſelves reduced to a dilemma not very pleaſant. On a meſſage from the Commons, that they were ready to proceed in their evidence, a Committee was appointed by their Lordſhips to ſearch into precedents, which occaſioned a ſuſpenſion of the buſineſs till nearly the concluſion of the ſeſſion. At length the Report being made, Lord Portcheſter moved, May 16, "that their Lordſhips now proceed in the trial." This was oppoſed by the Lord Chancellor, who recommended the appointment of a ſecond Committee to ſearch for more precedents, and defended by Lord Loughborough, now the oracle of Whiggiſm

Whiggiſm in the Houſe, in a very able ſpeech, in the courſe of which he warned their Lordſhips "not to act uncautiouſly with regard to the popular part of the Conſtitution. Let them not deny that the people were any thing, leſt they compelled them to think they were every thing. In commenting upon the precedents before the Houſe, he pointed out the fallacies of Sir GEORGE JEFFRIES and other COURT SYCOPHANTS, and reſted his argument on the authority of the great Conſtitutional Lawyers Hale, Holt, and Foſter. His Lordſhip ſaid, he had it in charge from the Lord Preſident, Lord Camden, who was prevented from perſonal attendance, to ſtate that Nobleman's opinion as perfectly co-incident with his own: and the Lord Preſident had left with him an opinion of the famous Selden, that the new Parliament, convened in conſequence of the Duke of Buckingham's Impeachment 1628, were authorized to have called upon their Lordſhips for judgment againſt the Duke." The abatement of the Impeachment was on the other hand maintained by Lord Kenyon, Lord Abingdon, &c. but on the diviſion, the motion of Lord Portcheſter was carried by a great and deciſive majority. And their Lordſhips, with the Reſolution of 1685 ſtill ſtanding in their Journals, acquainted the Houſe of Commons by meſſage, that they were now ready to proceed in the

trial. But very little progreſs was made in it during the ſhort remainder of the ſeſſion.

Soon after the receſs of Parliament (February 21, 1791), Mr. Mitford, a lawyer of eminence in the Houſe, moved, with the previous ſanction and approbation of Government, for a bill to relieve the Engliſh Catholics from the legal penalties ſtill exiſting and in force againſt them. The propoſed Act of Toleration was however confined to ſuch of the Catholics as ſhould ſubſcribe a certain declaration or *proteſt* againſt the aſſumed authority of the Pope, &c. drawn up in terms to which it could ſcarcely be expected that the majority of Catholics could conſcientiouſly aſſent.

Mr. Fox roſe to object to the bill, not for what it did, but for what it did not contain. He entreated that the bill might be made general. "Let the Statute Book, ſaid this great ſtateſman and advocate of toleration, be reviſed, and ſtrike out all thoſe laws which attach penalties to mere opinions." And Mr. Burke joined in reprobating the abſurdity and iniquity of thoſe ſtatutes which condemn every man who worſhips GOD in his own way, as guilty of treaſon againſt the State. Mr. Pitt commended theſe ſentiments, but thought it not *prudent* to *act* upon them; and the bill paſſed in its preſent form: in conſequence of which a moſt invidious and miſchievous line of diſtinction

was

was drawn between the proteſting and non-proteſting Catholics, neither of whom were chargeable with, or ſuſpected of, the ſlighteſt tincture of diſloyalty to the State.

In the courſe of the ſeſſion, Mr. Fox, ever active in the cauſe of liberty, moved for a bill to aſcertain the rights of juries in the matter of libel. With reſpect to the pretended diſtinction between law and fact, Mr. Fox obſerved, "that when a man was accuſed of murder, a crime conſiſting of law and fact, the Jury every day found a verdict of Guilty: and this was alſo the caſe in felony and every other criminal indictment. Libels were the only exception, the ſingle anomaly. He contended, that if the Jury had no juriſdiction over libels, the Counſel who addreſſed them on either ſide as to the criminality of the publication were guilty of a groſs and inſolent ſarcaſm. Mr. Fox put this matter in a remarkably ſtrong point of view, by adverting to the law of treaſon. It was admitted on all hands, that a writing might be an overt act of treaſon. In this caſe, if the Court of King's Bench were to ſay to the Jury, 'Conſider only whether the criminal publiſhed the paper—do not conſider the nature of it—do not conſider whether it correſpond to the definition of treaſon or not'—would Engliſhmen endure that death ſhould be inflicted without a Jury having had an opportunity of delivering their ſentiments, whether the

individual was or was not guilty of the crime with which he was charged? Mr. Fox wished to know, "whether the modern doctrine of libels did or did not extend to high treason?" On its transmission to the House of Lords, the bill was opposed on the second reading by the Lord Chancellor, on pretence of its being too late in the session to discuss a measure of such importance. The principle of the bill was most ably defended by the Law Lords Camden and Loughborough, with whom Lord Grenville concurred; but the bill was finally postponed.

The evidence on the Slave Trade being at length closed, Mr. Wilberforce, on the 18th of April 1791, brought forward his long expected motion of Abolition, which he introduced with a copious and masterly display of the arguments in favor of that measure. The crimes and villanies to which this horrid traffic had given rise, were detailed with a minuteness which placed not merely the persons actually concerned, but human nature itself, in a light the most degrading and detestable. And the mover remarked with all the eloquence of feeling and of truth, that the history of this commerce was written in characters of blood. "Let us, said he, turn our eyes for relief from this disgraceful scene to some ordinary wickedness. No such relief, however, was as yet to be obtained from the justice and humanity of the House; for, on concluding

cluding his ſpeech with moving "for a bill to prevent the farther importation of African Negroes into the Britiſh Colonies," it was negatived by a majority of ſeventy-five voices.

Had the ſame motion been made two years before, while the feelings of the Houſe were freſhly awakened, there can ſcarcely exiſt a doubt but that it muſt have ſucceeded. Such is the importance of ſeizing the fortunate and favorable moment of action! To qualify this refuſal, a bill was introduced and paſſed, for chartering a Company for the purpoſe of cultivating Weſt Indian and other tropical products at Sierra Leona on the coaſt of Africa, by the uſe of free negroes; an experiment which is likely to be productive, at no diſtant period, of very important effects.

It had been long a ſubject of complaint, that the great and extenſive province of Canada continued under a government in the higheſt degree arbitrary and deſpotic. This government was indeed acknowledged to be merely temporary; but excuſes were not wanting to prolong the duration of it. At length Mr. Pitt, in purſuance of an intimation in the Royal Speech, moved for leave to bring in a bill to repeal certain parts of the act reſpecting the government of Canada paſſed in the 14th year of his Majeſty's reign; and to enact farther proviſions for the better government thereof. By the propoſed bill, the province was di-

vided into two distinct governments, by the appellations of Upper and Lower Canada. Councils nominated by the Sovereign, and Houses of Assembly chosen by the People, were established in each. The Habeas Corpus Act was asserted as a fundamental law of their Constitution: and by a very important and admirable clause the British Parliament were restrained from imposing any taxes whatever, but such as might be necessary for the regulation of trade and commerce; and to guard against the abuse of this power, the produce of such taxes was to be at the disposal of the respective Provincial Legislatures. Upon the whole, this bill contained a noble charter of liberty, and did honor to the Minister who proposed, and to the Assembly which adopted it. The clauses in the bill which militated against the general principle of it, were opposed by Mr. Fox with extraordinary animation and ability. "The great object of all popular assemblies," Mr. Fox said, "was, that the people should be fully and fairly represented; but when the assembly of one province was to consist of only sixteen, and the other of thirty persons, they deluded the people by a mockery of representation. They seemed to give them a free Constitution, when in fact they withheld it. And he hoped it would never be said, that the Constitution of Canada was modelled after that of England. That these representatives should be elected

for

for the term of ſeven years, he reprobated as equally inconſiſtent with freedom. Even in England, where the frequent return of elections was attended with ſo much real inconvenience, the propriety of the Septennial Bill was juſtly a ſubject of doubt: but in a country ſo differently circumſtanced as Canada, there could be no plauſible objection to annual or at moſt triennial elections. Another ſtrong ground of objection with Mr. Fox was, that the Legiſlative Councils were unlimited as to numbers by any other reſtriction than the pleaſure of the King; to whom a power was alſo reſerved of annexing to certain honorary and titular diſtinctions an hereditary right of ſitting in Council. As to hereditary honors, or hereditary powers, to ſay they were good or not, as a general propoſition, was difficult—but he ſaw nothing ſo good in them as to warrant their introduction into a country where they were not known. He did not think it wiſe to deſtroy them where they exiſted; but to create them where they did not exiſt, he conſidered as exceedingly unwiſe. He could not account for it, unleſs it was that, Canada having been formerly a French colony, there might be an opportunity of reviving thoſe titles of honor, the extinction of which ſome gentlemen ſo much deplored, and to revive in the Weſt that ſpirit of chivalry which had fallen into ſo much diſgrace in a neighboring country."

Theſe

Theſe incidental expreſſions awakened the reſentment of Mr. Burke, who on the re-commitment of the bill, May 6, roſe, as he ſaid, to ſpeak to its general principle. He enlarged upon "the importance of the act which they were now about to perform. The firſt conſideration was, the competency of the Houſe to ſuch an act. A body of rights commonly called the *Rights of Man* had been lately imported from a neighboring kingdom. The principle of this new code was, that all men were by nature free, and equal in reſpect of their rights. If this code therefore were admitted, the power of the Houſe could extend no farther than to call together the inhabitants of Canada to chooſe a Conſtitution for themſelves. The practical effects of this ſyſtem might be ſeen in St. Domingo and the other French iſlands. They were flouriſhing and happy till they heard of the Rights of Man. As ſoon as this ſyſtem arrived among them, Pandora's box, replete with every mortal evil, ſeemed to fly open; hell itſelf to yawn, and every demon of miſchief to overſpread the face of the country." Mr. Burke continuing to launch out into the moſt violent invectives againſt the Conſtitution and Government of France, was repeatedly and loudly called to order, and at length compelled to ſit down.

Mr. Fox, when the tumult had ſubſided, with firmneſs defended his former ſentiments relative to

to the French Revolution; and repeated, "that he thought it upon the whole one of the moſt glorious events in the hiſtory of mankind. In this aſſertion however he ſpoke of the *Revolution*, not of the *Conſtitution*, which ſtill remained to be improved by experience and accommodated to circumſtances. The Rights of Man, which his Right Honorable Friend had ridiculed as viſionary, were the baſis of the Britiſh Conſtitution. Our Statute Book recognized 'the original inherent rights of the people as men, which no preſcription could ſuperſede, no accident remove or obliterate.' Theſe had once been the principles of his Right Honorable Friend, from whom he had learned them. His Right Honorable Friend had ſaid with equal energy and emphaſis, 'that he knew not how to draw a bill of indictment againſt a whole people.' Having been taught by him that no revolt of a nation was cauſed without provocation, he could not help rejoicing at the ſucceſs of a Revolution reſting upon the ſame baſis with our own—the immutable and unalienable Rights of Man."

Mr. Burke roſe again, and in vehement terms inſiſted "that he was perfectly in order; and that the diſcuſſion of the Quebec Bill was a proper opportunity to put the country on its guard againſt thoſe dangerous doctrines which prevailed in France, and which had found ſo many advocates

cates here. He obſerved, that he had differed on many occaſions from Mr. Fox, but there had been no loſs of friendſhip between them. But there was ſomething in the ACCURSED French Conſtitution that envenomed every thing."

Mr. Fox on hearing this interrupted him, ſaying "there was no loſs of friendſhip."

Mr. Burke replied "THERE WAS—he knew the price of his conduct; he had done his duty, and their friendſhip WAS at an END."

Mr. Fox, on whom the attention of the Houſe was now eagerly fixed, roſe to reply, but his feelings were too powerful for utterance. All the ideas ſo long cheriſhed, of gratitude, eſteem and affection, ruſhed upon his ſuſceptible and generous mind; and involuntary tears were obſerved to ſteal down his cheek. A profound and expreſſive ſilence pervaded the Houſe. At length Mr. Fox, recovering himſelf, ſaid, "that however events might have altered the mind of his Right Honorable Friend, for ſuch he muſt ſtill call him, he could not ſo eaſily conſent to relinquiſh and diſſolve that intimate connection which had for twenty-five years ſubſiſted between them. He hoped that Mr. Burke would think on paſt times; and, whatever expreſſions of his had cauſed the offence, that he would at leaſt believe ſuch was not his intention."

The conceſſions of Mr. Fox made no viſible

impreſſion on the haughty and unbending temper of Mr. Burke; and from this day a ſchiſm took place in the politics of the Oppoſition party, which has been productive of very important conſequences.

As the moſt luminous introduction to the principal remaining tranſaction of this Seſſion of Parliament, it will be proper now to advert to the actual ſituation of affairs on the Continent.

No ſooner had Leopold King of Hungary aſſumed the Auſtrian ſceptre, than he reſolved on terminating the war with Turkey; and under the powerful mediation of England and Pruſſia, a convention was concluded Auguſt 1790, at Reichenbach, after a negotiation of ſome months, protracted in the unavailing hope of retaining poſſeſſion of Belgrade, that important fortreſs, which, fifty years before, England had exerted her utmoſt influence to ſecure to the Houſe of Auſtria. But now ſwayed by Pruſſian counſels, and eagerly ſolicitous to advance the intereſts of that upſtart and inſolent power, in contra-diſtinction to thoſe of Auſtria, the antient and genuine ally of Britain, ſhe harſhly and peremptorily inſiſted on its reſtitution, in common with all the other Auſtrian conqueſts, to the Ottoman Porte. In return, the Auſtrian Netherlands were guarantied to the Houſe of Auſtria, and the poſſeſſion of the Imperial Crown eventually enſured to his Hungarian Majeſty.

Majeſty. The Flemings refuſing, notwithſtanding their preſent ſtate of abandonment, to return to the Auſtrian dominion, a great military force was ſent into the country in the autumn of 1790, under the command of Marſhal Bender, which quickly effected their total reduction; and on the 1ſt of January, 1791, a ſolemn *Te Deum* was ſung at Bruſſels in celebration of that happy event.

Sweden alſo, diſappointed in her views and projects of ambition, thought proper to ſign a ſeparate peace with Ruſſia, Auguſt 1790, on the baſis of the former treaties of Abo and Nyſtadt.

The Courts of London and Berlin, elated with the ſucceſs of their mediation at Reichenbach, now in high and arrogant language ſignified to the Empreſs of Ruſſia their pleaſure that peace ſhould be reſtored between the Ottoman and Ruſſian Empires, on the terms of a general reſtitution of conqueſts. The Empreſs replied with equal haughtineſs, "that ſhe would make peace and war with whom ſhe pleaſed, without the intervention of any foreign power." Not however chooſing too far to provoke the reſentment of theſe formidable and ſelf-created arbitrators, ſhe ſecretly intimated her willingneſs to conclude a peace with Turkey, on the condition of retaining the country eaſtward of the Neiſter, as a reaſonable indemnification for the expences of the war. This

was

was a waſte and deſert tract of territory, valuable only for the ſecurity it afforded to her former acquiſitions, and for including within its limits the ſtrong and important fortreſs of Oczakow. This being peremptorily refuſed, the Empreſs broke off the conference, and determined to proſecute the war.

On the 28th of March, 1791, Mr. Pitt delivered a meſſage to the Houſe of Commons from his Majeſty, importing, "that the endeavors which he had uſed in conjunction with his allies to effect a pacification not having proved ſucceſsful, his Majeſty judged it requiſite, in order to add weight to his repreſentations, to make ſome further augmentation of his naval force." And this meſſage being taken into conſideration, Mr. Pitt enlarged much on the neceſſity of attending to the preſervation of the balance of power in Europe. "The influence of the Turkiſh Empire, he ſaid, was of great effect in the general ſcale. Its preſent ſituation was ſuch as to afford juſt cauſe of apprehenſion to other powers: and to PRUSSIA in particular it muſt be highly injurious, to ſuffer the Turkiſh Empire to be diminiſhed in force and conſequence. He therefore moved an Addreſs, aſſuring his Majeſty that his *faithful Commons* would make good ſuch expences as may be found neceſſary." This Addreſs was oppoſed

poſed with the whole ſtrength and energy of the Oppoſition.

Mr. Fox ſaid, "the Right Honorable Mover of the Addreſs had enveloped himſelf in myſtery and importance, but explained nothing. When the balance of power was mentioned as a reaſon for arming, it ought to be ſhewn how it was endangered. We had no quarrel with the Empreſs of Ruſſia: we had no alliance with Turkey. But by the abſurd pride of interfering in the affairs of every Sovereign State, we involved ourſelves in continual expence, and were expoſed to the perpetual hazard of war. It was to ſecond the ambitious policy of Pruſſia, and not for any intereſts of our own, that we were now called upon to arm. The Czarina, it was well known, had offered to give up all her conqueſts but a barren diſtrict, unprofitable and worthleſs except for a ſingle place contained in it, which place was Oczakow. But would any one ſeriouſly pretend that the balance of Europe depended upon the trivial circumſtance, whether Oczakow ſhould in future belong to the Empire of Ruſſia or of Turkey? That this was even with Miniſters themſelves a novel idea, was plain; for Oczakow had been taken in 1788, and in 1789 his Majeſty had aſſured the Parliament and the Nation, that the ſituation of affairs was ſuch as promiſed us a continuance

tinuance of peace." The queſtion was at length carried in favor of the Addreſs by 228 to 135 voices.

The proſpect of a war with Ruſſia, on theſe frivolous grounds, gave more diſſatisfaction to the public at large than any meaſure of Mr. Pitt's adminiſtration. And on the 12th of April Mr. Grey moved, and ſupported with a very extenſive diſplay of knowledge and political ability, a ſeries of reſolutions expreſſive of the impolicy and inexpediency of this meaſure. On the part of the Miniſtry the importance of Oczakow was magnified to a moſt ridiculous exceſs. It was ſtyled the key of Conſtantinople, whence it led to the acquiſition of Alexandria and the Lower Egypt. The ſucceſs of the Miniſtry in former negotiations was oſtentatiouſly dwelt upon, and the confidence of the Houſe challenged in terms unuſually ſtrong and pointed.

Mr. Sheridan with ſarcaſtic keenneſs aſked the Miniſter, "on what baſis this confidence was to reſt. Did he recollect the different proſpect to which we had been directed to turn our eyes in this year? Did he recollect that this was the promiſed millennium, that halcyon year in which we had been flattered, inſtead of freſh burdens, with a reduction of expence, and a clear ſurplus for the extinction of the public debt? The ſyſtem

we had adopted in concert with Prussia was, he said, a system of ambition, of vain glory, and of intrigue, and it had fastened upon us a concern above all others pernicious—that of English interference in German politics. As to the doctrine of confidence in Ministers, he totally abjured it. The more constitutional doctrine was that of suspicion and watchfulness. The Minister had indeed risen wonderfully in his demands. He recollected the time when he had contented himself with asking only for a guarded and rational confidence. He then advanced to the pitch of a firm and steady confidence; and it was at last grown to a blind and implicit confidence. And it appeared that the degree of confidence required rose in an exact *ratio* to the absurdity of the measure to be adopted." On the division, the effect of the extreme unpopularity of the war without doors, and the ability with which it was exposed and ridiculed within, strikingly appeared, the numbers being 179 ayes to 259 noes.

To enter into a war in the face of such a minority was wholly impossible. The point in dispute was instantly and wisely given up by the Ministers; Oczakow and its district remained with Russia; and in the course of the ensuing summer (August 1791) peace was concluded between the two empires. The session of Parliament

ment terminated June 10, 1791, his Majesty expressing his perfect satisfaction at the zeal with which the two Houses had applied themselves to the consideration of the different objects which he had recommended to their attention.

The state of affairs in France, though passed over in total and discreet silence in the speech, was now become very critical. That once popular minister M. Necker, finding his measures thwarted and opposed by the more popular leaders of the Assembly, and equally destitute of the confidence of the Court, had sent in his resignation September 1790, and was suffered to retire without one expression of public regret—such is the caprice and inconstancy of the people! Previous to his resignation, but certainly not by his advice, a decree had passed the Assembly, imposing an oath upon the whole body of the Clergy "to maintain to the utmost of their power the new Constitution of France, and *particularly* the decrees relative to the civil constitution of the Clergy."

By the former decrees of the Assembly relative to the Clergy, all connection with the See of Rome, spiritual and temporal, was virtually abolished; and the oath was upon other accounts so obnoxious, that it could not possibly be taken by the majority of the Clergy *ex animo*. It was, in fact, productive of the most pernicious conse-

quences. The Pope by a Bull denounced the ſentence of excommunication againſt thoſe of the Clergy who took the civic oath: it was refuſed by multitudes in the church; and thoſe who ſubmitted to it became, in reſentment of the outrage offered to their feelings, far more inimical to the Conſtitution and dangerous to the State than before. A moſt ſevere and unjuſt decree was ſubſequently promulgated, by which the non-juring Clergy were not only deprived of their benefices, but ſubjected to heavy penalties for non-compliance; in conſequence of which numerous emigrations of that unfortunate claſs of men took place.

On the 22d of January, 1791, the King of France communicated to the Aſſembly a letter from Leopold King of Hungary, now advanced to the dignity of Emperor, containing ſtrong proteſtations of amity towards France, but at the ſame time intimating, that to conſolidate that friendſhip the revocation of the decree of Auguſt 4, 1790, will be neceſſary; that all innovations in virtue of that decree be aboliſhed, and matters put upon their antient footing. This was the famous decree which annihilated all feudal and ſeignorial rights, and in the ſcope of which ſeveral of the petty Princes of Germany, poſſeſſing fiefs in Lorraine and Alſace, were comprehended; and ſo far as the right of property was affected by the decree, compenſations had been offered by the Aſſembly, and

and by ſome of theſe Princes actually accepted. This, however, now ſerved as a pretext and cover for the meaſures in contemplation of the Court of Vienna, which had already ſtationed *cordons* of troops on the Suabian frontier, and northward from the circles of the Rhine to the banks of the Meuſe. The Aſſembly, on this occaſion, voted a large augmentation of military force, regardleſs of the intimation of the King, that the Emperor had, in this inſtance, acted merely officially, in conformity to the decrees of the Diet. The King himſelf did not eſcape the ſuſpicion of entertaining a private and dangerous correſpondence with the Imperial Court; and he was entreated by the Aſſembly, formally and explicitly to announce the Revolution which had taken place to the different Courts of Enrope.

The popular jealouſies and diſcontents were ſtill more openly and rudely indicated. On the 18th of April, being on the point of ſetting out from Paris to the palace of St. Cloud, to paſs the Eaſter, the royal carriage was ſtoped by an immenſe crowd of perſons, not all of the loweſt rank, under the apprehenſion of an intended eſcape, and conſequently Counter-Revolution. And notwithſtanding the entreaties and proteſtations of M. de la Fayette, Commandant of the National Guard, who attended the King's perſon, and pledged himſelf for his ſecu-

rity, he was finally compelled to desist from his purpose, and return to the Tuilleries.

On a complaint of this insult to the Assembly, the President made a respectful apology to the King; and his Majesty, *properly attended*, put in execution his design of visiting St. Cloud.

Anxious to regain the ground he had lost, the King, in compliance with the request of the municipality of Paris, dismissed from his person those men who were most notoriously disaffected to the Constitution.

M. de Montmorin was ordered to write, in the name of the Monarch, a circular letter, expressed in terms the most popular and captivating, to his Ambassadors at the different Courts of Europe, "to the end," as it is expressed, "that no doubt may remain with regard to his Majesty's intentions, his acceptance of the free form of Government, and his irrevocable oath to maintain it."

In return, the President of the Assembly waited on his Majesty with an address of thanks and felicitation for the fresh proof he had given of his regard for the Constitution. "For the first time, Sire," said the President, "those sacred maxims which announce the Rights of Man have made their appearance amidst the mysteries of diplomatic correspondence. Strangers shall now learn from yourself, that it was by your aid the French Constitution

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was regenerated, and that you are its guardian, its defender, and its avenger. Seated on the first throne in Christendom, you have given the first example of a great Monarch proclaiming the liberties of his people to mankind. A happy calm has now succeeded to the stormy hopes and fears between which the Nation wavered in uncertainty. You have now imposed silence on the detractors of our New Constitution. The hydra of faction had a hundred heads, and you have cut off the last of them."

To this the King, with deep hypocrisy, replied, "I am charmed beyond expression at the warmth of esteem which the National Assembly is pleased to express towards me. If they could but read my heart, they would there see sentiments engraved on it, that would well justify the confidence of the Nation. All distrust would then be banished from their bosoms, and we should all be happy."

This, however, was but a transient and fallacious calm, nor was distrust, for a single moment, really banished from their minds. Unhappily the event but too well justified their suspicions.

On the night of the 20th of June (1791), the King, Queen, Dauphin, and Princess Elizabeth, sister to the King, also the Count and Countess de Provence, suddenly disappeared. They had, as it was quickly discovered, made their escape through a subterranean passage extending from the Tuilleries

to the Seine. Monſieur and Madame took the road to Mons; the reſt of the Royal Family that of Montmedi. The King left behind him a paper, in which he formally revoked all his paſt oaths and ſolemn declarations, as the effect of compulſory influence, prohibiting the Miniſters from ſigning any order, and enjoining the Keeper of the ſeals to ſend them to him when required in his behalf.

On the firſt emotions of reſentment at the diſcovery of this event, the King's arms and effigies were taken down and broken by the populace of Paris. A proclamation of the Aſſembly, however, ſoon reſtored order. The royal authority was formally ſuſpended by a decree of the Aſſembly, and a Proviſional Executive Council appointed. The National Guard were inſtantly in arms; and deputations from all the different public bodies appeared at the bar of the Aſſembly, with the ſtrongeſt and firmeſt profeſſions of patriotiſm and obedience.

Scarcely had the firſt emotions of indignation ſubſided, when it was announced that the King and Queen had been arreſted in their progreſs, at a place called Varennes, near the frontier. They were quickly brought back to Paris, and again quietly conſigned to the palace of the Tuilleries.

On the 27th of June, Commiſſioners from the Aſſembly waited upon the King, to receive his written declaration reſpecting the late event. His Majeſty

Majeſty aſſerted, " that he had no intention of leaving the kingdom, but meant merely to fix at Montmedi, till the vigor of the government ſhould be reſtored, and the Conſtitution SETTLED." The reſpect due to Majeſty was ſtill preſerved, but confidence was for ever at an end. It was incontrovertibly proved, that the King had long carried on a ſecret correſpondence with M. de Bouillé, Governor of Metz, and Commandant of the forces on the German frontier, who had ſent a detachment to eſcort the King to Montmedi; a poſition to be maintained only by force, and whence, in caſe of neceſſity, he could eaſily retreat to the Auſtrian territory of Luxembourg. The accidental arreſt of the King entirely diſconcerted theſe meaſures; and M. de Bouillé made his eſcape into Germany, where he publiſhed a furious declaration againſt the Aſſembly, calculated only to injure the cauſe he meant to ſerve.

In conſequence of the repeated perfidies of the King, it was propoſed by ſome of the bolder, perhaps the wiſer Members of the Aſſembly, to declare an abdication, and to place the Dauphin on the throne. On the queſtion being agitated in the Aſſembly, it was aſked, what could be done with the King in caſe of a depoſition; to which one of the Members replied, " Let him go and keep ſchool at Corinth." But the milder and more moderate counſels prevailed. The King remained at the Tuilleries,

Tuilleries, vigilantly guarded, till the fabric of the Conſtitution was completed.

On the 3d of September, the CONSTITUTIONAL ACT was preſented to the King, who ſignified his acceptance of it in writing, September 13; and on the following day he appeared at the Aſſembly, introduced by a grand deputation of ſixty Members, ſolemnly to conſecrate the aſſent he had given; concluding with an oath "to be faithful to the Nation and to the Law, and to employ the powers veſted in him for the maintenance of the Conſtitution."

On the 30th of September (1791), the Conſtituent National Aſſembly, after an uninterruped ſeſſion of two years and four months, terminated its exiſtence by a ſpontaneous diſſolution; leaving behind it, notwithſtanding ſome human errors and frailties, an illuſtrious and never-dying fame. Under whatever varying form freedom may ſubſiſt in France, the primary eſtabliſhment of it muſt doubtleſs be aſcribed to the heroic courage and enlightened patriotiſm of this Aſſembly: and in the emphatic words of the Roman orator it may with propriety be aſked, "*Quæ enim res unquam, proh ſancte Jupiter! in omnibus terris eſt geſta major, quæ glorioſior, quæ commendatior hominum memoriæ ſempiternæ?*"

In England the Anniverſary of the Revolution in France was again celebrated, not without a cer-

tain mixture of indiſcretion, conſidering the lowering aſpect of the political horizon in France, contraſted with the brilliant proſpect of laſt year, and the odium it had incurred in conſequence of the events which had ſince taken place in both kingdoms. Party ſpirit at this period raged throughout England in a more violent degree than had been known ſince the days of Sacheverel; and in no place more than in the great and opulent town of Birmingham, diſtinguiſhed by the reſidence of the celebrated PRIESTLEY, equally famous in the different capacities of philoſopher and divine. As a theologian he had ſignalized himſelf as the grand reſtorer of the antient Unitarian ſyſtem, maintained at the æra of the Reformation by Socinus and other learned men of the Poliſh or Cracovian ſchool; and which, refuſing divine honors to the Founder of the Chriſtian Religion, acknowledged him merely in the character of a Teacher and Prophet ſent from GOD, and demonſtrating the authenticity of his miſſion by *ſigns and wonders*, which GOD did by him.

The extraordinary and tranſcendent ability with which this ſimple but obnoxious ſyſtem was vindicated by Dr. Prieſtley, as the genuine unadulterated doctrine of primitive Chriſtianty, had brought over to his opinions numerous converts, and had excited againſt him ſtill more numerous enemies. Regarding civil eſtabliſhments of Chriſtianity as

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the grand barrier to the propagation of the truth, he had in various publications argued againſt them with great force, inveighing againſt the corruptions to which they had given riſe, though otherwiſe of a diſpoſition mild and beneficent, with extreme bitterneſs and acrimony. He had on all occaſions expreſſed himſelf on the ſubject of Government, as an intrepid and zealous defender of the civil and religious rights of mankind; of this he had given a recent proof in a moſt able and maſterly reply to Mr. Burke's famous book on the French Revolution.

It is ſuperfluous to ſay that he was under theſe circumſtances the object of deteſtation to the bigoted, of wonder to the ignorant, and of dread to the intereſted and the artful. Every poſſible artifice having been put in practice to excite the paſſions of the populace againſt him, the day of the commemoration of Gallic liberty was deemed a fit occaſion to carry the nefarious deſigns previouſly concerted into execution. The friends of liberty, aſſembled for that purpoſe at an hotel in the town, were during the dinner inſulted by a furious mob without, ſhouting, with the occaſional intermixture of horrid imprecations, CHURCH and KING! which words, it may be obſerved, however innocent or venerable in their unconnected ſtate, are when conjoined the ſymbol of all miſchief. At five o'clock the company diſperſed, but the windows of the hotel were

nevertheleſs

nevertheleſs broken by the mob, who ſeemed then inclined to ſeparate.

But this would have been a petty and common revenge. Incited and inflamed anew by their leaders, they bent their courſe to the chapel where Dr. Prieſtley uſually officiated; this they ſet on fire, and afterwards proceeded to the old meeting, which they demoliſhed in the ſame manner. At ten o'clock the mob, now mad with rage and intoxicated with liquor, took the route of Fair-hill, the reſidence of Dr. Prieſtley, about a mile diſtant from the town. Happily the family had notice juſt ſufficient to effect their eſcape; but the houſe, furniture, library, and philoſophical apparatus were ſet on fire, and conſumed in their more than Vandalian rage of deſtruction. The four following days were employed in the demolition of the elegant houſes and villas in the town and its vicinity belonging to thoſe perſons who had chiefly diſtinguiſhed themſelves as advocates in the cauſe of Gallic liberty, or by their attachment to the religious principles of the great Hereſiarch Dr. Prieſtley.

During this time the magiſtrates of the place, who were ſuſpected of conniving at the firſt beginning of this tremendous riot, and who had not read or attempted to read the Riot Act, were ſtruck with terror and conſternation; nor was any effectual effort made to check theſe infamous and diſgraceful proceedings—far worſe indeed than any diſ-

orders that had as yet occurred in the progreſs of the French Revolution—till the arrival, on the Sunday evening, of three troops of dragoons from Nottingham; in a ſhort time after which, reinforcements daily arriving, order and tranquillity were perfectly reſtored. Many of the rioters were taken into cuſtody and brought to trial, but three only were capitally puniſhed. Such was the ſuperior lenity of the Government on this occaſion, contraſted with the rigors of the Special Commiſſion iſſued for the trial of the London rioters in 1780, on which occaſion thirteen perſons were, under the ſanction of the Lord Preſident Loughborough, included in the ſame indictment!

The latter months of the year paſſed over in gloomy ſilence. The Parliament was not convened till the 31ſt of January 1792. The King announced in his ſpeech "the marriage of his ſon the Duke of York with the Princeſs Frederica, daughter of his good brother the King of Pruſſia. He informed the two Houſes that a treaty had been concluded, under his mediation and that of his allies, between the Emperor and the Ottoman Porte, and preliminaries agreed upon between the latter of thoſe powers and Ruſſia. The general ſtate of affairs in Europe promiſed a continuance of peace, and he was induced to hope for an immediate reduction of the naval and military eſtabliſhments."

The addreſs of thanks and approbation moved by

by Mr. Charles Yorke, and ſeconded by Sir James Murray, excited ſome ſevere animadverſions from Mr. Fox, who, in alluſion to the ceſſion of Oczakow to Ruſſia, obſerved, "that it required no moderate ſhare of aſſurance for Miniſters to ſay to gentlemen who had ſupported their meaſures as wiſe and neceſſary, 'That which you laſt ſeſſion contended for as of the utmoſt importance, we have now abandoned as of none. Will you have the goodneſs to move an addreſs approving what we have done?" Mr. Fox thought it extraordinary that, in mentioning the ineſtimable bleſſings of peace and order, no notice was taken of the violent interruption of order which had occurred in the courſe of the ſummer. At the cloſe of the eighteenth century we had ſeen the revival of the ſpirit and practice of the darkeſt ages. It would have been well if his Majeſty had ſpoken of thoſe riots in the terms they merited. They were not riots for bread—they were not riots in the cauſe of liberty, which, however highly to be reprobated, had yet ſome excuſe in their principle; they were riots of men neither aggrieved nor complaining—of men who had ſet on foot an indiſcriminate perſecution of an entire deſcription of their fellow-citizens, including perſons as eminent for their ability, as blameleſs in their conduct, and as faithful in their allegiance, as this or any country could boaſt."

Mr. Pitt deprecated with warmth the invidious revival

revival of a ſubject ſo unpleaſant and unprofitable, and wiſhed rather to call the attention of the Houſe to the flouriſhing condition of the commerce and finances of the nation, of which in a ſhort time he propoſed ſubmitting to the Houſe a correct ſtatement. Accordingly on the 17th of February the Miniſter, in the courſe of a moſt eloquent and animated ſpeech, delineated a picture of national proſperity, more flattering than even the moſt glowing imagination had ventured to ſuggeſt. "The amount of the permanent revenue, with the land and malt duties annexed, from January 1791 to January 1792, he eſtimated at 16,730,000l. being 300,000l. more than the aggregate of the preceding year. The permanent expenditure, including the intereſt of the debt, the annual million applied towards its extinction, the civil liſt, and the military and naval eſtabliſhments, he calculated at 15,810,000l. leaving a clear ſurplus of more than 900,000l. In this ſtate of things he thought himſelf authorized to propoſe the repeal of a part of the more burdenſome taxes, to the amount of about 200,000l. per annum; and at the ſame time to apply the ſum of 400,000l. to the reduction of the national debt, in aid of the annual million appropriated by Parliament. This would ſtill fall far ſhort of his eſtimate of the national ability, and there was good ground to believe that we had not reached by many degrees the ſummit of our proſperity.

ſperity. When the debentures to the American Loyaliſts ſhould be diſcharged, which would happen in about four years, an addition of near 300,000l. would accrue to the revenue. In conſequence of the general improvement of credit, the three per cents. would ſoon riſe ſo high as to enable the Parliament to effect a reduction of the four, and, as ſoon as by law redeemable, of the five per cents. which would add the ſum of 700,000 l. or little leſs to the ſinking fund. The indefinite additions which might be expected from the increaſing produce of the exiſting taxes, the reſult of our rapidly increaſing commerce, muſt mock all calculation. Our exports had riſen one-third in value ſince the year 1783, i. e. from 14,741,000l. to 20,120,000l. and our internal trade had increaſed in at leaſt an equal proportion. Thus ſhall we be enabled to make a ſwiftly accelerated progreſs in the eſſential work of liquidating the national debt, and in a very ſhort ſpace of time to reach a point which perhaps not long ſince was thought too diſtant for calculation. On the continuance of our preſent proſperity it is indeed impoſſible to count with certainty; but UNQUESTIONABLY there never was a time when, from the ſituation of Europe, we might more reaſonably expect a durable peace than at the preſent moment." After developing with much ability and ſagacity the hidden but operative ſprings of the returning proſperity of the country, the Miniſter

concluded with the following memorable words: "From the result of the whole I trust I am entitled to infer, that the scene which we are now contemplating is not the transient effect of accident, not the short-lived prosperity of a day, but the genuine and natural result of regular and permanent causes. The season of our severe trial is at an end; and we are at length relieved, not only from the dejection and gloom which a few years since hung over the country, but from the doubt and uncertainty which, even for a considerable time after our prospect had begun to brighten, still mingled with the hopes and expectations of the public. We may yet indeed be subject to those fluctuations which often happen in the affairs of a great nation, and which it is impossible to calculate or foresee; but as far as there can be reliance on human speculations, we have the best ground from the experience of the past to look with satisfaction to the present, and with confidence to the future. *Nunc demum redit animus, cum non spem modo ac votum securitas publica, sed ipsius voti fiduciam et robur assumpserit.*" Such were the brilliant hopes which the nation was at this moment of exultation taught to indulge, and with such dazzling splendor rose the morn of a year destined to set in darkness, calamity, and blood!

The papers relative to the Russian armament being laid on the table, Mr. Grey noticed several

material omiſſions, and an entire chaſm in the correſpondence from October 31, 1790, to May 26, 1791, and moved "that the papers thus withheld be laid before the Houſe." Mr. Pitt affirmed, that the papers called for by Mr. Grey were highly improper to be produced. He did not think it conſiſtent with good policy, to diſcloſe circumſtances which might endanger the ſituation of our public alliances; and again urged the neceſſity of confidence in the Executive Government. Mr. Fox indignantly replied, "that the confidence of the Nation was placed in their Repreſentatives; and if thoſe to whom they had given their confidence ſhould transfer that confidence to the Miniſter, they were *betrayed*, not repreſented. As to this pretended neceſſity of confidence, there need be nothing ſecret where there was nothing wrong; yet pending the negotiation with Ruſſia they were kept in the dark, and, by a climax in confidence, when the negotiation was terminated, they were ſtill denied information." In the courſe of the debate it was forcibly obſerved, in alluſion to the projected war with Ruſſia, "that it would require more eloquence even than that which had been lately employed in deſcribing the proſperity of this country, to juſtify a meaſure which put its proſperity ſo much to the hazard."

On the evidence of the papers actually produced, and the facts publicly aſcertained, Mr. Whitbread

on the 27th of February (1792) moved a reſolution of cenſure on the Miniſters, importing, " that Oczakow was not an object of ſufficient importance to juſtify the armed interference of this country." Mr. Whitbread ſaid, " It was the moſt ſelf-evident of all propoſitions, that no arrangement affecting Oczacow could in any way affect the political or commercial intereſts of Great Britain. We exported nothing thither, we imported nothing from it: the oſtenſible cauſe of the diſpute, therefore, could not be the real cauſe. There was ground to believe the exiſtence of a ſecret negotiation, by which Pruſſia flattered herſelf with the hope of obtaining Dantzic and Thorn as a compenſation for permitting the Empreſs of Ruſſia to retain poſſeſſion of Oczacow. It appeared that the Empreſs had ſo early as December 1789 requeſted the interference of Great-Britain to effect a peace, upon the terms of extending her frontier to the Nieſter; and erecting the provinces of Moldavia, Beſſarabia, and Wallachia into an independent principality under a Chriſtian Prince. Theſe terms were refuſed by the Court of London, and the Empreſs was told that no attention would be paid to any terms not reſting upon the baſis of a *ſtatus quo*. At length, after bluſtering, threatening, and arming, came the humiliating Memorial of the 29th of June 1791, which at once conceded all that we had negotiated, threatened, and armed, to obtain."

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The motion was ably ſupported by Mr. Grey, who remarked, " that ſince the affair of Holland the Miniſter had become intoxicated with power, and fancied he could parcel out kingdoms and provinces at his pleaſure. He ſeemed as much delighted with this idea as Don Quizote with books of chivalry, and amuſed himſelf with curvetting in this court, prancing in that, menacing here, vaunting there—in a word, out-heroding Herod."

Mr. Fox took a comprehenſive view of the queſtion, and dwelt with much energy and effect on the folly of making Oczakow a primary object of negotiation, and the inconſiſtency and diſgrace of its ſubſequent abandonment. " Oczacow, ſaid he, was every thing by itſelf; but when Miniſters added to Oczacow the honor of England, it became nothing. Oczacow and honor weighed nothing in the ſcale. Honor is, in the political arithmetic of Miniſters, a *minus* quantity to be ſubtracted from the value of Oczakow. Againſt the vain theories of men who project fundamental alterations upon grounds of mere ſpeculative objection, the Conſtitution may be eaſily defended; but when they recur to facts, and ſhew me how we may be doomed to all the horrors of war by the caprice of an individual, who will not even condeſcend to explain his reaſons, I can only fly to this Houſe, and exhort you to rouſe from your lethargy of confidence into the active miſtruſt and vigilant control which

are your duty and your office." On the diviſion there appeared for the queſtion 116, againſt it 244.

A motion ſimilar to that of Mr. Whitbread was nearly at the ſame time made by Earl Fitzwilliam in the Upper Houſe. It was oppoſed by the Lords Grenville and Hawkeſbury, the latter of whom threw much light on the real motives of the late interference, by expatiating largely on the *ingratitude* of Ruſſia, and the injurious conduct of that Power during *the late war*; and it evidently appeared by the language of this ſecret adviſer of public meaſures, that the ARMED NEUTRALITY of the Empreſs, although twelve years had paſſed ſince the date of it, was not yet forgotten or forgiven. And Lord Carliſle did not therefore expreſs himſelf with perfect accuracy, when, in reviewing the political objects of the armament, his Lordſhip ſaid, "he believed they might ALL be reſolved into the endeavor to obtain for Pruſſia *Dantzic* and *Thorn*." The motion was negatived by a majority of 82 to 19 voices.

Although it appeared by the event of the motion of Mr. Wilberforce in the preceding ſeſſion, that the enthuſiaſm of Parliament on the ſubject of the Slave Trade had greatly ſubſided; that of the public at large was nevertheleſs increaſing, and it had now attained its higheſt pitch. The table of the Houſe of Commons was covered with petitions from all parts of the kingdom, imploring in earneſt language

language the abolition of that iniquitous and inhuman traffic.

On the 2d of April (1791) the Houſe reſolved itſelf into a Committee on the Slave Trade, at the inſtance of Mr. Wilberforce, who moved at the cloſe of a very able ſpeech, a ſecond time the queſtion of Abolition. Mr. Wilberforce declared, "that from his exertions in this cauſe he had found happineſs, though not hitherto ſucceſs. It enlivened his waking and ſoothed his evening hours, and he could not recollect without ſingular ſatisfaction that he had demanded juſtice for millions who could not aſk it for themſelves—AFRICA! AFRICA! he exclaimed with paſſionate emotion, your ſufferings have been the theme that has arreſted and engages my heart. Your ſufferings no tongue can expreſs, nor no language impart." Mr. Wilberforce was powerfully ſupported by many of the moſt reſpectable members of the Houſe; amongſt whom Mr. Whitbread particularly diſtinguiſhed himſelf by the energy and animation of his remarks. "It was the neceſſary quality of deſpotiſm, he ſaid, to corrupt and vitiate the heart: and the moral evils of this ſyſtem were ſtill more to be dreaded than the political. But no mildneſs in practice could make that to be right which was fundamentally wrong. Nothing could make him give his aſſent to the original ſin of delivering man over to the deſpotiſm of man. It was too degrading to

ſee, not the produce of human labor, but man himſelf, made the object of trade."

In conſequence of the ardor diſplayed by the nation at large in this buſineſs, it was at length determined to concede what it was now become difficult, perhaps dangerous, to withhold. Mr. Dundas, advanced to the dignity of Secretary of State by the reſignation of the Duke of Leeds—and the organ of the interior Cabinet in the Houſe of Commons—now therefore, after a plauſible ſpeech recommending to the Houſe the adoption of a middle and moderate plan, ſuch as would reconcile the intereſts of the Weſt India Iſlands with the eventual abolition of the trade, thought proper to move that the word "gradual" might be inſerted before "abolition."

Mr. Pitt, who had invariably ſupported the meaſure of abolition, not as a miniſter merely, but as a man feeling for all mankind, declared his decided diſapprobation of the amendment propoſed by his Right Honorable Friend; and, in a ſpeech fraught with argument and eloquence, conjured the Houſe not to poſtpone even for an hour the great and neceſſary work of abolition. "Reflect," ſaid Mr. Pitt, "on the 80,000 perſons annually torn from their native land! on the connections which are broken! on the friendſhips, attachments and relationſhips that are burſt aſunder! There is ſomething in the horror of it that ſurpaſſes all the bounds of imagination. How ſhall we repair the miſchiefs

miſchiefs we have brought upon that continent? If, knowing the miſeries we have cauſed, we refuſe even now to put a ſtop to them, how greatly aggravated will be the guilt of Britain! Shall we not rather count the days and hours that are ſuffered to intervene, and to delay the accompliſhment of ſuch a work? I truſt we ſhall not think ourſelves too liberal, if we give to Africa the common chance of civilization with the reſt of the world. If we liſten to the voice of reaſon and duty, and purſue this night the line of conduct which they preſcribe, ſome of us may live to ſee a reverſe of that picture from which we now turn our eyes with ſhame and regret. We may live to behold the natives of Africa engaged in the calm occupations of induſtry, in the purſuits of a juſt and legitimate commerce. We may behold the beams of ſcience and philoſophy breaking in upon their land, which, at ſome happy period in ſtill later times, may blaze with full luſtre; and, joining their influence to that of pure religion, may illuminate and invigorate the moſt diſtant extremities of that immenſe continent. Then may we hope, that even Africa, though laſt of all the quarters of the globe, ſhall enjoy at length in the evening of her days thoſe bleſſings which have deſcended ſo plentifully upon us in a much earlier period of the world—

—— Nos primus equis oriens afflavit anhelis;
Illic ſera rubens accendit lumina veſper.

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In this view, as an atonement for our long and cruel injuſtice towards Africa, the meaſure now before the Houſe moſt forcibly recommends itſelf to my mind. The great and happy change to be expected in the ſtate of her inhabitants is, of all the various and important benefits of the abolition, in my eſtimation incomparably the moſt extenſive and important." Thus nobly can Mr. Pitt at times redeem his errors, and deviations from rectitude; and ſtill preſerve a place in the eſteem of the wiſe, and affection of the good. The amendment of Mr. Dundas was nevertheleſs carried on the diviſion by a majority of 68 voices. On which he ſubſequently moved, " that the importation of negroes into the Britiſh colonies ſhould ceaſe on the 1ſt of January 1800." This, on the motion of Lord Mornington, was after great difficulty and debate altered to January 1, 1796. A ſeries of reſolutions founded on this baſis were then agreed to, and ſent up for the concurrence of the Lords.

But theſe reſolutions were fated to meet with a very cold reception in the Upper Houſe; and from a large proportion of their Lordſhips a moſt determined oppoſition. As this was a favorite meaſure with the nation, and had indeed been ſupported in a peculiar manner by the *voice of the people*, they were highly and juſtly offended to ſee the Duke of Clarence, third ſon of the King, commence his career of public life with a violent declamation againſt

againſt the abolition, and invective againſt its advocates; whom he falſely and fooliſhly repreſented as actuated by the ſpirit of political and religious fanaticiſm. With a view to protract, and if poſſible to diſmiſs the buſineſs, the Lord Chancellor moved, "that evidence be heard, not before a ſelect committee, according to the propoſition of Lord Grenville, but at the bar of the Houſe." This was ſeconded by Lord Hawkeſbury, the well known and inveterate enemy of the abolition; of whom it has been affirmed with the utmoſt bitterneſs of ſarcaſm, "that in ſpite of the habitual fraud and falſehood of his character, he is earneſt and ſincere in his contempt of virtue and hatred of freedom." The motion being carried, the Houſe ſlept over the buſineſs during the remainder of the ſeſſion.

Mr. Pitt having, in his ſpeech on the motion for the repeal of the Teſt, avowed in the moſt unequivocal and *unguarded* terms the right of the Diſſenters to a full and complete toleration; Mr. Fox embraced the opportunity of bringing forward in the courſe of this ſeſſion a motion for the repeal of thoſe penal ſtatutes, which, notwithſtanding the exiſtence of the Toleration Act, were ſtill in force againſt thoſe who in any manner impugned the doctrine of the TRINITY. He ſhewed from a ſpecification of authentic facts, that theſe laws were far from being a mere dead letter; not to mention the hatred and opprobrium which they were

were the means of creating. Such was the wretched bigotry foſtered and cheriſhed by theſe laws, that a Biſhop of the Church (Dr. HORSLEY) had not ſcrupled in a recent publication to declare "that, Unitarianiſm being *hereſy*, even the moral good of the Unitarians was ſin." Mr. Fox expreſſed his ardent wiſh to extirpate hereſy by *fire*—not indeed in the old mode of burning heretics, but by burning all thoſe ſtatutes which formed the code of perſecution." Mr. Pitt appeared on this occaſion ſomewhat embarraſſed, and reſted his oppoſition chiefly on the diſuſe and oblivion into which the acts in queſtion had fallen, and the dangerous alarm which might be excited by the repeal—diſclaiming in warm terms the principles and character of a perſecutor. Mr. Fox in reply remarked, that he knew not how to diſtinguiſh between a perſecutor and an advocate for penal laws in matters of religion, which was the preciſe definition of the term. As to the general alarm of which Mr. Pitt was apprehenſive, it was the bittereſt ſatire upon the ſpirit of his own Adminiſtration, to ſuppoſe the temper of the public ſo fatally changed, as not to endure the repeal of laws ſo execrable, and till a recent period ſo generally the ſubject of execration. Mr. Fox's motion was rejected by a majority of 79 voices*.

* As a ſtriking hiſtoric contraſt to the ſpirit diſplayed by the Britiſh

On the 21ſt of May, Mr. Whitbread brought forward a motion of enquiry on the ſubject of the Birmingham

Britiſh Government at this period, it may not be improper to ſelect a few paſſages from the Speech of M. Rabaud de St. Etienne, a Proteſtant Clergyman and Member of the National Aſſembly, on moving the 10th Article of the Declaration of Rights, on the ſubject of Religious Toleration, and which was received by the Aſſembly with the higheſt approbation and applauſe.—" Liberty is a common right. All citizens have a right to it, or no one has. He that would deprive others of their liberty, attacks his own, and deſerves to loſe it. Shall in the 18th century the barbarous policy be adhered to of dividing a nation into a favored and diſgraced *caſte?*—I will not do the nation the injuſtice to ſuppoſe, that it could pronounce the word *Intolerance*. But, Gentlemen, it is not Toleration that I plead for—it is Liberty. Toleration! Sufferance! Pardon! Clemency! What ideas of injuſtice do not theſe words convey, if difference of opinion be indeed no crime? Toleration! For ever be preſcribed the word, which holds us out as Citizens that deſerve pity; which exhibits us as culpable perſons, who require pardon from thoſe whom chance or education leads to think in a manner different from ourſelves! Error, Gentlemen, is not a crime. He who profeſſes it, takes it for truth—it is truth to him—he is obliged to profeſs it, and no man, no ſociety of men has a right to forbid him. And who, Gentlemen, in this mixture of error and truth, who is he that will dare to affirm he has never been deceived—that truth is conſtantly with him, and error with others? I *demand* then, Gentlemen, for the French Proteſtants, for all the Non-Catholics of the kingdom, that they be placed on the ſame footing in every thing, and without any reſerve, with all the other Citizens.—Permit it not, Gentlemen, generous and free Nation! do not allow to be cited as a precedent for you, the example of thoſe nations, who, ſtill intolerant, proſcribe

Birmingham riots. He introduced this motion by an excellent ſpeech, containing a copious ſtatement of the facts and circumſtances which led to a ſuſpicion, that the Magiſtrates had been moſt culpably remiſs in their duty on this occaſion; and even that Miniſters had been negligent in their exertions for the ſuppreſſion of thoſe diſorders. Mr. Whitbread referred the Houſe to the proceedings of a former Houſe of Commons, who, on a ſimilar occaſion, A. D. 1716, had addreſſed the King (Geo. I.) in terms expreſſive of the utmoſt

ſcribe your worſhip amongſt them. You are not deſigned to receive examples, but to give them. Europe, which aſpires to Liberty, expects from you great leſſons, and you are worthy to furniſh them.—You are too wiſe, Gentlemen, to be aſtoniſhed that there are men who think differently from you; who worſhip GOD in another manner than you do; and you will not regard the difference of opinion as an injury done to you. Taught by the experience of ages, by the errors and the ſufferings of your anceſtors, you will ſay without doubt, It is time to lay aſide the ſword of perſecution ſo deeply ſtained with the blood of our countrymen. It is time to reſtore to them their too-long-forgotten rights. It is time to break in pieces thoſe unjuſt barriers which ſeparate them from us; and to unite in one common bond of affection theſe oppreſſed and proſcribed Citizens, ſo long eſtranged from the boſom of their country. They will preſent themſelves to you covered with the blood of their fathers, and they will ſhew you the marks of their own chains.—My country is free. Let her ſhew herſelf worthy of Liberty, by equally imparting it to all claſſes of Citizens, without diſtinction of rank, birth, or religion."

indignation

indignation and abhorrence of the ſpirit which had incited theſe atrocious outrages; and requeſting that full compenſation might be made to the ſufferers. Mr. Whitbread inſiſted on the diſgrace which England would incur in the view of Europe, if a man, who had done ſo much honor to his country by his philoſophical and literary talents, as Dr. Prieſtley, ſhould fail to obtain a ſignal reparation for the injuries he had ſuſtained. "Should he," ſaid this animated ſpeaker, "by the ſpirit of perſecution be compelled to abandon his native ſoil, there is no nation which would not be ready and eager to afford him an aſylum. He can go to no country where his fame has not gone before him." Mr. Whitbread ſaid, "he knew that toleration was the language in faſhion; but it was very eaſy for men to have toleration on their lips, and perſecution in their hearts." Mr. Secretary Dundas, in reply, vindicated the Government very ſatisfactorily from the ſuſpicion of not having exerted themſelves to the utmoſt in quelling the riots. He ſaid, "that Government did not proſecute the Magiſtrates who were charged with neglect of duty, becauſe the Attorney General was of opinion, that there was no probability of conviction, and an ineffectual proſecution might be attended with very diſagreeable conſequences." Mr. Whitbread's motion was ably ſupported by Mr. Smith and Mr. Windham, but more particularly by Mr. Grey,

Grey, in an admirable ſpeech, well deſerving deep and permanent attention.

In anſwer to ſome harſh reflections of Mr. Dundas, on the recent conduct of the Diſſenters, Mr. Grey thus nobly and eloquently expreſſed himſelf: "I do not, Sir, ſtand here as the profeſſed advocate of the Diſſenters; but whilſt we exclaim againſt the raſh and intemperate language of ſome amongſt the Diſſenters, let us impartially and ſeriouſly aſk ourſelves, if no juſt cauſe has been given to them of diſcontent or of reſentment? It is well known, that the Diſſenters have ever diſtinguiſhed themſelves as the zealous advocates of the glorious Revolution—that they have been always numbered amongſt the moſt firm and ſteady adherents of the Proteſtant ſucceſſion, and of the illuſtrious Houſe of Hanover when that ſucceſſion was ſuppoſed with reaſon to be in danger; and at a time when the reigning family did not depend upon the CHURCH as its chief bulwark and ſupport. Conſcious of their fidelity and attachment to the government under which they lived—an attachment which the circumſtances of the times afforded them frequent and deciſive occaſions to demonſtrate—exerciſing under the expreſs ſanction of the State their inherent right of private judgment in religion—they at length applied to the Legiſlature to be reſtored to the privileges of Citizens, of which they had been ſo long un-

juſtly diveſted. When this claim was refuſed with every circumſtance of indignity and inſult—when they were branded as the implacable enemies of the State—when they were reproached, notwithſtanding their uniformly peaceable demeanor, as ſeditious and factious hypocrites—when the ridiculous and obſolete Tory clamor was revived, that the CHURCH *was in* DANGER—when they were told 'that the extent of their loyalty might be meaſured by the blood of a King'—can we wonder that they ſhould diſcover the paſſions and feeling of men?—that anger ſhould beget anger—that in the colliſion of zeal againſt zeal, the voice of reaſon ſhould be overborne and loſt? Are we really deſirous of eſtabliſhing univerſal and permanent content and ſatisfaction? The experience of all ages ſhews, that the only effectual mode is to annihilate all legal oppreſſion. While the ſpirit of intolerance predominates in the counſels of any country, there will neceſſarily be diſcontent, reſentment, and anger. And it is in vain to expect to obviate the evil conſequences of ſuch a ſyſtem, or to re-eſtabliſh the general tranquillity, by adding contumely to oppreſſion, or by an attempt to defend injuſtice by falſehood. We are ourſelves zealouſly attached to the Conſtitution, becauſe we enjoy in their full extent the privileges and immunities derived from it. But what right have we to expect the ſame attachment from thoſe who are

excluded from theſe privileges? Though to us the Conſtitution is the object of affection and reverence, to them whom it injures and oppreſſes it is an odious and tyrannic Conſtitution. Wherever political partialities prevail, and political diſtinctions are injuriouſly admitted, there political animoſities will be excited. Such is the nature of man; and of this we may reſt aſſured, that equity is the only ſafe and permanent baſis of policy: and till we determine to regulate our conduct by this principle, diſcontents and animoſities muſt and will prevail. And the diſorders and commotions which we now lament, are the genuine offspring of that policy to which unhappily for our peace and ſecurity we are ſtill reſolved to adhere." The motion was finally negatived by a great and deciſive majority.

The Libel Bill introduced in the laſt ſeſſion by Mr. Fox, and which was loſt in the Houſe of Lords, was this ſeaſon triumphantly carried through both Houſes, and paſſed into a law—notwithſtanding the pertinacious oppoſition of the Law Lords Thurlow, Kenyon, and Bathurſt. The Marquis of Lanſdowne ſarcaſtically obſerved in the debate, that he did not blame Lawyers for making a ſtand againſt the preſent bill. It was well worth a ſtruggle on the part of the profeſſion. It was a proud ambitious profeſſion, deſirous of obtaining power over all. And if the Noble Lord

at

at the head of the King's Bench could overthrow it, as his Lordſhip had ſtudied politics as well as law, he would reign Lord Paramount of England." The Law Lords joined in a proteſt againſt the bill, which will remain as a perpetual monument of the triumph of common ſenſe over legal and profeſſional ſubtilty.

Another point was alſo gained during this ſeſſion in favor of the general ſyſtem of freedom, by a bill introduced into the Houſe of Peers by Lord Elgin, for the relief of the Scottiſh Epiſcopalians, who had long been ſubject to heavy penalties on the original ground of notorious diſaffection to the Revolution Eſtabliſhment. But, like other *high-flying* and Jacobitical Tories, they were now become moſt conſpicuous for loyalty amongſt the loyal. An objection however was ſtarted by the Lord Chancellor, whether, according to a clauſe in the preſent bill, ſpecifying the deſcription of perſons to be relieved, the State could with propriety recognize the validity of ordination by Biſhops exerciſing their functions independent of the State. And, in his profound knowledge of eccleſiaſtical antiquity, his Lordſhip ventured even to intimate his doubts, whether Biſhops could *exiſt* in any Chriſtian country not authorized by the State." But his Lordſhip being aſſured by the Biſhop of St. Davids, who ſpoke in favor of this "afflicted part of the Church of Chriſt," that Chriſtian Biſhops

exiſted three hundred years before the happy alliance between Church and State took place under the auſpices of the Emperor Conſtantine the Great, his Lordſhip was pleaſed to declare himſelf ſatisfied; and the bill paſſed without any farther oppoſition.

In conſequence of the ſpirit of diſcontent, and even of diſaffection, by which a conſiderable proportion of the community ſeemed at this period to be animated, and which had given riſe to various political aſſociations of an alarming nature, and in which ideas of government reform were carried to a viſionary and dangerous extreme; it was thought proper by many of the moſt diſtinguiſhed advocates of Conſtitutional Liberty, about this period to inſtitute a ſociety under the name of the "Friends of the People," for the ſole purpoſe of effecting a Reform in Parliament on the principles ſo often ſtated and ſo ably enforced by Mr. Pitt, and other judicious patrons of reform, preſuming that all other neceſſary and beneficial reforms would follow in ſafe and regular gradation. About thirty Members of Parliament entered their names as members of this Aſſociation, which alſo comprehended many of the moſt eminent characters in the kingdom, whether in reſpect of political or literary ability. It is remarkable, that this moſt uſeful and laudable aſſociation, this broad and lofty mound thrown up for the defence of the Conſti-

tution againſt the rage of republican innovation, ſeemed to excite more the alarm of the Government than all the other aſſociations united. And when Mr. Grey, himſelf a member of the new ſociety, gave notice of his intention to move, in the courſe of the enſuing ſeſſion, for an enquiry into the ſtate of the repreſentation, Mr. Pitt roſe with unuſual vehemence to declare "his total diſapprobation of introducing, at a period ſo critical and dangerous as the preſent, a diſcuſſion of ſuch difficulty and importance. This he affirmed was not a time for experiments; and if he was called upon either to riſque this, or for ever to abandon all hopes of reform, he would ſay he had no heſitation in preferring the latter alternative. He ſaw with concern the Gentlemen to whom he alluded, virtually united with others who profeſſed the reform of abuſes, and meant the ſubverſion of government." The expediency and policy of timely and temperate reform were on the other hand powerfully argued by the friends of the projected motion. "As to the obnoxious allies of the late aſſociators, Mr. Fox ſaid, the objection might be completely retorted by aſking the Miniſter, 'Whom have you for your allies?' On the one part there are infuriated republicans, on the other the ſlaves of deſpotiſm. The firſt are the raſh zealots of liberty, the latter its inveterate and determined foes." The conſternation of the Mini-

ſiers evidently appeared by a ROYAL PROCLAMATION almoſt immediately iſſued againſt the public diſperſion of all ſeditious writings, and againſt all illegal correſpondencies—exhorting the Magiſtrates to vigilance, and the People to ſubmiſſion and obedience.

This proclamation being laid before the Houſe (May 25), and an Addreſs moved of approbation and ſupport, it was oppoſed by Mr. Grey with much warmth, and the Proclamation itſelf condemned in ſevere terms as a meaſure inſidious and pernicious. The "diligent enquiry" enjoined by the Proclamation after the authors and diſtributors of *wicked and ſeditious writings*, could only tend to eſtabliſh an odious and arbitrary ſyſtem of ESPIONAGE. This was the ſyſtem which had made the old government of France ſo much the object of general deteſtation, and it was a ſyſtem unworthy of the Sovereign of a free people to recommend. Mr. Grey ſtrongly intimated his belief, that the real object of the Proclamation was merely to diſcredit the late Aſſociation in the view of the public."

This Mr. Pitt diſclaimed in very explicit terms; and expreſſed his high reſpect for many of the members of the Aſſociation in queſtion, declaring "that he differed from them only in regard to the time and mode which they had adopted for the attainment of their object. The Aſſociation in

queſtion, he ſaid, did not come within the ſcope and purview of the Proclamation, which was levelled againſt the daring and ſeditious principles which had been ſo aſſiduouſly propagated amongſt the people, under the plauſible and deluſive appellation of the Rights of Man." The Addreſs was finally carried without a diviſion, and, receiving the concurrence of the Upper Houſe, was preſented in form to the King. It was followed by Addreſſes from all parts of the kingdom: and the Miniſtry, finding their ſtrength, commenced proſecutions againſt a prodigious number of offenders, amongſt whom Thomas Paine ſtood moſt conſpicuous. Notwithſtanding the profeſſional ability of Mr. Erſkine, whom he had engaged as his advocate, he was found guilty of the charge; but foreſeeing the probability of this event, he had previouſly abſconded to France.

The attention of Parliament towards the concluſion of the ſeſſion was forcibly drawn to the ſituation of India—for ſome time paſt involved in a general war, the origin and progreſs of which it may be proper conciſely to explain. From the æra of the peace of Mangalore, concluded by the Company with Tippoo Saib in 1784, the power of that Prince had been regarded as very formidable. He was avowedly and devotedly attached to the intereſts of France, to which country he had ſoon after that event ſent a ſplendid embaſſy, and eſtabliſhed

an intimate friendſhip and alliance. The period however at length arrived, when, France being occupied with other and greater objects, a ſevere vengeance might be ſafely taken on the TYRANT OF MYSORE for all his real or pretended perfidies and oppreſſions. The Dutch Eaſt India Company had in the laſt century conquered from the Portugueſe two forts, ſituated within the territory of Myſore, called Cranganore and Acottah. Theſe they had recently diſpoſed of by purchaſe to the Rajah of Travancore, an ally of the Engliſh Company. Tippoo reſenting the conduct of the Dutch, and affirming that the Rajah had no right to make any ſuch purchaſe within the limits of his territory, marched a conſiderable military force in the ſummer of 1789 againſt Cranganore, with a profeſſed intent to reduce it to his dominion. The conduct of the Rajah in making the purchaſe in queſtion, on ſo precarious and invidious a title, was ſeverely cenſured by the Government of Madras; and Mr. Holland, the Preſident, warned him to deſiſt from his ambitious deſigns.

In conſequence of the powerful mediation thus interpoſed, Tippoo withdrew his troops, ſtill, however, aſſerting his claim to the feudal ſovereignty of the forts, and offering, as it is ſaid, to ſubmit his pretenſions to any impartial arbitration. But on the 1ſt of May, 1790, the Rajah, relying, as it afterwards appeared, on the ſupport of the ſuperior

Preſidency

Presidency of Bengal, made an offensive attack on the army of Tippoo Sultan; and the war having thus commenced, the English Government was *bound in honor and justice* to defend their ally. This the Company were the better enabled to do, not merely from their knowledge of the state of France, but from the treaties they had actually formed with the Nizam of the Decan, and the Mahratta States, for the express purpose of humbling the power of Mysore.

The grand Carnatic army immediately assembling, under the command of General Meadows, marched through the southern or Coimbetore country, and penetrating the *Ghauts* or passes of the mountains, advanced towards the city of Seringapatam, the capital of Mysore.

On the western side, the Bombay army, under General Abercrombie, after reducing Cannanore and several other places on the coast, entered the kingdom of Mysore; which, notwithstanding the pretended oppression of the Government, exhibited every where the marks of the highest cultivation and prosperity. The Sultan defending himself with great resolution, and no mean display of military skill, General Meadows found himself under the necessity of retreating to the vicinity of Madras; where, in the month of December (1790), Lord Cornwallis assumed the command of the army in person.

The plan of the war was now entirely changed, and

and a grand effort reſolved on, to force a paſſage to Seringapatam through the country lying directly weſtward of Madras.

On the 21ſt of March, 1791, the important town of Bangalore was taken by ſtorm, with little loſs on the part of the Britiſh, but with a dreadful carnage of the unreſiſting garriſon.

On the 13th of May, the army, by extraordinary exertions, arrived in ſight of the ſuperb capital of Myſore, defended by the Sultan in perſon: and, on the next day, an action took place, in which Tippoo was ſaid to be defeated; though he does not appear to have ſuſtained any very conſiderable loſs: and the ſwelling of the Cavery (on an iſland formed by the branches of which Seringapatam is ſituated), together with the want of proviſions, compelled Lord Cornwallis to begin his retreat to Bangalore, almoſt before his victory could be announced.

General Abercrombie, who had advanced through the *Ghauts* on the oppoſite ſide, with a view to form a junction with Lord Cornwallis, was now alſo obliged to lead back his army, fatigued, haraſſed and diſappointed, over the mountains they had ſo lately and with ſuch difficulty paſſed. During theſe tranſactions the troops of the Nizam and the Mahrattas kept diſcreetly aloof, leaving the burden of the war almoſt entirely to the Britiſh.

But the next campaign, for which Lord Cornwallis

wallis made unremitted preparations, opened under more favorable auſpices.

Early in February, 1792, the eaſtern and weſtern armies, reſuming their former plan of operations, effected, before the end of the month, a junction under the walls of Seringapatam; the forces of the Peiſhwa and of the Nizam encamping alſo at a ſinall diſtance, and furniſhing to the Britiſh army a plentiful ſupply of ſtores and proviſions.

On the 7th of February, a general attack was made by moonlight on the lines of the Sultan, which was attended with important effects; Tippoo being compelled to relinquiſh his former advantageous poſition, which covered his capital, and Seringapatam was in conſequence of this defeat cloſely and completely inveſted.

The ſituation of Tippoo being now in the higheſt degree alarming and almoſt hopeleſs, he thought proper to ſend a *Vakeel* to the camp of Lord Cornwallis to ſue for peace; which the Britiſh General granted on the ſevere terms, 1. Of his ceding one half of his dominions to the Allied Powers. 2. Of paying three crores and thirty lacks of rupees, as an indemnification for the expences of the war. 3. The releaſe of all priſoners; and, 4. The delivery of two of his ſons as hoſtages for the due performance of the treaty.

On the 26th of February, the Princes, each mounted on an elephant magnificently capariſoned, proceeded

proceeded to the Britiſh camp, where they were received by Lord Cornwallis with all poſſible demonſtrations of kindneſs and affection. The eldeſt, Abdul-Kalic, was about ten; the younger, Mirza-ud-Deen, about eight years of age. The Princes were attired in white muſlin robes, with red turbans richly adorned with pearls, and they conducted themſelves with a politeneſs and propriety which aſtoniſhed the ſpectators.

On the 19th of March, 1792, the definite treaty, ſigned by the Sultan, was delivered by the young Princes, with great ſolemnity, into the hands of Lord Cornwallis; but the ſums ſpecified in the ſecond article not being actually paid, the Princes ſtill remained under the ſafeguard and cuſtody of his Lordſhip.

Though the entire knowledge of theſe tranſactions had not reached England when the affairs of India came under the diſcuſſion of the Houſe of Commons, Mr. Dundas ſtated the general ſituation of the Company to be in the higheſt degree flouriſhing; and, by an intricate deduction of figures, he ſhewed the ſurplus of the Bengal revenue for the preceding year to be no leſs than eleven hundred thouſand pounds. "The flouriſhing ſtate of the revenue was however remarked by Mr. Francis to be not preciſely the ſame thing with the flouriſhing ſtate of the country, which might be ill able to bear the weight of theſe impoſitions. The

ſeizures

ſeizures for non-payment of the land revenue were, he ſaid, moſt alarmingly notorious: and he held in his hand, at that moment, two Bengal advertiſements, the one announcing the ſale of ſeventeen villages, the other of forty-two."

This diſcuſſion took place on the 5th of June; and on the 15th the ſeſſion cloſed with a ſpeech from the throne, in which his Majeſty expreſſed to the two Houſes "his great concern at the actual commencement of hoſtilities in different parts of Europe, aſſuring them that his *principal care* would be to preſerve to his people the uninterrupted bleſſings of PEACE."

The ſecond National Aſſembly of France met October 1, 1791. By an act of patriotic diſintereſtedneſs, very indiſcreet in its nature, and pernicious in its conſequences, the late Aſſembly had decreed, that no perſon ſhould be eligible to two ſucceſſive legiſlatures. The preſent Aſſembly, therefore, was neceſſarily deſtitute of the experience, and, according to the general opinion, of the talents likewiſe of the former. And being choſen at the preciſe period when the national reſentment was at the higheſt pitch, they were of a much more anti-monarchical complexion. The opening ſpeech of the King was received nevertheleſs with great applauſe; and the Preſident replied in terms of confidence and reſpect, expreſſing the united wiſh of the Aſſembly to comply with the benevolent

benevolent and patriotic views of the King. "Such, Sire," said he, "is our duty, such are our hopes, and the gratitude and blessings of the people will be our reward." The prospect, however, was quickly overcast. By the King's express desire, on his acceptance of the Constitutional Act, a decree of indemnity had passed respecting the emigrants, without any exception whatever, on the condition of their returning to their country within a limited time. But the Agent deputed on this commission to the Princes at Coblentz was not only treated with contempt and insult, but actually imprisoned, on pretence of his want of passport.

In consequence of this outrage, and of the continuance of the hostile preparations of the emigrants, a decree passed the Assembly early in November (1791), declaring Prince Louis Stanislaus Xavier to have forfeited, in case he do not return to the kingdom in two months, his eventual claim to the Regency; and, by a subsequent decree, the Assembly pronounced the French hostilely assembled on the frontier, guilty of a conspiracy against their country, in case they did not return before the 1st of January 1792; incurring thereby the forfeiture of their estates during their lives, but without prejudice to their children.

On the 18th of November a severe decree passed the Assembly against the nonjuring Clergy, who were accused, with too much reason, of seditious and *incivic* practices. To

To both these decrees the King, insensible or careless of consequences, opposed his Royal veto. The Assembly, astonished at the conduct of the King, addressed him to take effectual measures to prevent the dangers which menaced the country. The King, in reply, assured the Assembly, that the Emperor had done all that could be expected from a *faithful ally*, by forbidding and dispersing all assemblages of Emigrants within his states. And he had acquainted the Elector of Treves, that if he did not, before the 15th of January, put a stop to all hostile dispositions, he should be obliged to consider him as the enemy of France.

The Assembly, however, were not lulled to security by these empty professions. Whatever was done in favor of the emigrants by the German Princes, was plainly done under the sanction of the Emperor; and it was now publicly known that the Emperor had, in concert with the King of Prussia, signed a Convention at Pilnitz in Saxony, August 1791, in the highest degree inimical to France, although no intimation had been given of this transaction from the Executive Power to the Assembly.

The short-lived popularity of the King was now vanished, never to return. Addresses were presented to the Assembly from every quarter of the kingdom, indicating their dissatisfaction with the Court, and their confidence in the firmness and patriotism

triotiſm of the Aſſembly. M. de Montmorin, unable to withſtand the torrent, reſigned his office, and M. de Leſſart ſucceeded.

The republican party, in conſequence of the inceſſant tergiverſations of the Monarch, gained great ſtrength; and, forming themſelves into a club or ſociety, aſſembling at the Convent of the Jacobin Friars, recently diſſolved, they acquired the popular and ſince famous appellation of JACOBINS. The friends of monarchy, on the other hand, had, from a ſimilarity of circumſtances, obtained the name of Feuillans.

The deſigns of Leopold gradually unfolded. On the 21ſt of December, official notice was given to the French Ambaſſador at the Court of Vienna, that the Emperor, underſtanding the Elector of Treves to be under apprehenſions from France, had been *conſtrained* to order Marſhal Bender to march to his relief and protection.

The King, in communicating this intelligence to the Aſſembly, affected great ſurpriſe at the reſolution of the Emperor. "He could not perſuade himſelf that the *good diſpoſitions* of the Emperor were changed; and wiſhed to believe that his Imperial Majeſty had been deceived as to the ſtate of facts, and been made to ſuppoſe that the Elector had indeed fulfilled all the duties of good neighborhood."

Preparations were now at laſt made for war; but the

the deſigns of the Emperor not being as yet ripe for execution, the Elector of Treves thought fit on a ſudden to change his tone, and to engage that within eight days the hoſtile aſſemblages within his dominions ſhould be entirely diſperſed.

The public diſcontents and clamors againſt the King riſing very high, and being charged almoſt openly with treachery to the Nation, his Majeſty was pleaſed to write (February 17, 1792) a letter to the Aſſembly, contradicting in very haughty terms theſe injurious reports, propagated by evil-minded people to alarm the public, and calumniate his intentions. "Nothing, he adds, keeps him at Paris but his WILL; and whenever he has reaſons to leave it, he will not diſguiſe them."

The correſpondence between the Courts of Paris and Vienna being laid before the Aſſembly on the 2d of March, it appeared that the Imperial troops in the Netherlands would ſhortly amount to ninety thouſand men. And the diſpatch of the Prince de Kaunitz (February 17) openly avowed the concert formed with other powers for *preſerving unimpaired* the Monarchy of France; and was throughout expreſſed in terms of menace and hoſtility, which left no doubt as to the ultimate determination of the Imperial Court. The Aſſembly, inflamed with this intelligence, raſhly and precipitately impeached M. de Leſſart for criminal con-

cealment and disobedience. He was succeeded by M. Dumourier.

On the first of March (1792) died suddenly of a malignant fever, the Emperor Leopold II. He was succeeded by his son Francis II. under the title of King of Hungary; but he was after a short interval elected Emperor of the Romans. This event made not the least change in the system of Austrian policy. Scarcely was the new Monarch seated on his throne, when he communicated to the Court of Berlin his determination strictly and literally to adhere to the terms of the treaty of Pilnitz. The King of France at this period, in conformity to his weak and wavering policy, made another effort to regain the ground he had lost, by nominating March 23, after various unpopular dismissions and appointments, M. Roland to the interior department, M. Claviere to that of Finance, and soon after M. Servan to be Minister of War—men who possessed the entire esteem and confidence of the Nation.

The categorical answer of the Court of Vienna at length arrived, insisting, "1. on the restitution of the feudal rights of the German Princes in Lorraine and Alsace; 2. the restoration of Avignon to the Pope; and 3. upon adequate satisfaction that the neighboring powers shall have no reason for the apprehension which arose from the present weakness

weakneſs of the internal Government of France." The firſt two of theſe propoſitions being inadmiſſible, and the laſt unintelligible, war was on the 20th of April declared againſt the King of Hungary.

At this criſis a very remarkable letter was written in confidence by the King of France to the King of England, doubtleſs by advice of his preſent popular Miniſters, expreſſing in the moſt flattering terms his obligations to his Britannic Majeſty for his impartial conduct, and making the moſt eager advances to the formation of a treaty of amity and alliance. "Between our two countries, ſays the French Monarch, new connections ought to take place. I think I ſee the remains of that rivalſhip which has done ſo much miſchief to both, daily wearing away. It becomes two Kings who have diſtinguiſhed their reigns by a conſtant deſire to promote the happineſs of their people, to connect themſelves by ſuch ties as will appear to be durable in proportion as the two nations ſhall have clearer views of their own intereſts. I conſider the ſucceſs of the alliance, in which I wiſh you to concur with as much zeal as I do, as of the higheſt importance. I conſider it as neceſſary to the ſtability of the reſpective conſtitutions, and the internal tranquillity of our two kingdoms; and I will add, that our union ought to COMMAND PEACE to EUROPE."

It was indeed evident that at this period England

might have commanded peace upon her own terms. Never did this country appear in a higher and more exalted point of view than at this moment; but from that fatality which has governed almoſt invariably the counſels of the preſent reign, ſhe ſuffered the glorious golden opportunity to paſs by unnoticed and unimproved. A diſtant and evaſive anſwer was returned; England, it was affirmed, could not mediate without the aſſent and approbation of both the parties—not recollecting certainly the late armed mediation in favor of the Ottoman Porte. And the patriots of France ſaw clearly from this moment, that the utmoſt they had to expect from the policy of the Engliſh Court was a cold and ſuſpicious neutrality.

On the commencement of hoſtilities M. Rochambeau was conſtituted Commander in Chief of the French armies, a ſeparate command being conferred on M. de Fayette. The war began with an unſucceſsful attack upon the cities of Tournay and Mons. M. Rochambeau, conceiving diſguſt at the conduct of the War Miniſter, reſigned his command to M. Luckner, a veteran officer, by birth a foreigner, and who had acquired great reputation in the German war of 1756—being then in the ſervice of Hanover. The new General did not diſappoint the expectations of the public. On the 18th of June the important town of Courtray ſurrendered to the arms of France, and the example of

Courtray

Courtray was ſoon followed by Menin, Ypres, and St. Ghiſlain; but on a ſudden, to the aſtoniſhment of the world, theſe conqueſts were evacuated, and the French armies retreated to their former ſtations in France. Marſhal Luckner ſubſequently declared, that in this buſineſs he acted in ſtrict conformity to the poſitive orders received from the King, who by this time had again adopted violent and dangerous counſels. Into this perpetual fluctuation of ſyſtem there enters without doubt at leaſt as much of imbecility as of treachery. Having no clear diſcernment of his own intereſt, and placing no reliance upon his own judgment, he was willing in a ſituation of unparalleled difficulty to make trial of any plan that was recommended to him from any quarter. It was truly ſaid of him, "*Le dernier venu avoit preſque toujours raiſon avec lui.*" At the preſent criſis his characteriſtic weakneſs ſeemed to approach the limits of abſolute infatuation.

On the 6th of June a decree paſſed the Aſſembly, on the ſuggeſtion of the Military Committee, for forming a camp of twenty thouſand men in the vicinity of Paris. To this the King refuſed his ſanction. The decree againſt the refractory clergy, which with ſome variations had a ſecond time paſſed the Aſſembly, was alſo rendered ineffectual by the royal veto; and to crown all, the King on the 12th of June announced in perſon to the Aſſembly

the diſmiſſion of the popular Miniſters Roland, Servan, and Claviere: and in a ſhort time M. Dumourier alſo reſigned his office. Previous to this event M. Roland wrote that celebrated letter to the King, which, had it not been written otherwiſe in the rolls of Fate or Providence, might have ſaved the Monarch and the Monarchy. "The fermentation is extreme," ſays this firm and virtuous patriot, "in the various parts of the empire; it will burſt upon us with a DREADFUL EXPLOSION, unleſs it be calmed by a well-founded confidence in your Majeſty's intentions: but this confidence will not be eſtabliſhed by mere promiſes and proteſtations—it can reſt upon facts only. The French Nation know their Conſtitution can ſuſtain itſelf; that Government will have all neceſſary aid whenever your Majeſty, wiſhing well to the Conſtitution, ſhall ſupport the Legiſlative Body by cauſing their decrees to be executed, and remove every pretext for popular diſſatisfaction, and every hope of the malcontents. The Revolution is eſtabliſhed in the public mind; it will be completed by the effuſion of blood, if wiſdom do not guard againſt evils which can YET be prevented. If force were recurred to, all France would riſe with indignation; and, diſtracted by the horrors of a civil war, ſhe would diſplay that gloomy energy, the parent of virtues and of crimes, ever fatal to thoſe who provoke it." After this fatal ſtep, a ſucceſſion of Miniſters, or phantoms

phantoms of Miniſters, paſſed rapidly over the ſtage; the general ſtate of things verged towards anarchy, the pillars of the State ſeemed to bow, and the fabric of Government tottered to its fall.

On the 20th of June an immenſe crowd aſſembled in the gardens of the Tuilleries, and, the gates of the Palace being thrown open, the populace entered into the apartment of the King. One of their leaders, more daring than the reſt, producing a red cap, the ſymbol of Liberty, deſired the King to put it on. He complied; and, in anſwer to the inceſſant and clamorous demands of the mob, he repeatedly declared, "that it was his firm intention to preſerve the Conſtitution inviolate." Though the inſults which the unfortunate Monarch was compelled to endure were grievous, no further injury was ſuſtained, and at the approach of night the people were perſuaded to diſperſe. The King made a formal complaint of this outrage to the Aſſembly; but, in the preſent ſituation of things, they could as eaſily calm the ſtorms of the ocean as the tumults of the people.

At this criſis M. de Fayette, quitting his army without leave or propriety, preſented himſelf unexpectedly at the bar of the Aſſembly, beſeeching, or rather demanding, of them "to ſave their country from ruin, by diſſolving the factious clubs, and inflicting exemplary puniſhment on the late diſturbers of the public peace." By this moſt im-

prudent and unwarrantable ſtep that General entirely loſt the confidence of the Nation, and incurred for this dangerous and unconſtitutional interference the ſevere cenſure of the Aſſembly; and he returned in a ſhort time full of reſentment and chagrin to his poſt in the army.

On the 1ſt of July it was proclaimed by the Aſſembly, "that the country was in danger." "Your Conſtitution, citizens, ſay they, reſtores the principles of eternal juſtice; a league of Kings is formed to deſtroy it—their battalions are advancing." The political horizon in France exhibited the deepeſt gloom. On the 14th of July the third anniverſary of the Revolution was celebrated; but inſtead of the animating ſhout of *Vive le Roi!* nothing was heard but the clamorous vociferations of *Vivent les Jacobins! A bas le* VETO!

It was in a ſhort time after this ceremony announced, that the combined armies of Auſtria and Pruſſia had entered France under the Duke of Brunſwic, who had on the 25th of July iſſued a proclamation which ſeemed purpoſely calculated to complete the ruin of the King. In this famous manifeſto the moſt dreadful vengeance is denounced againſt the French nation. Such of them as are found in arms againſt the troops of the allied powers, are threatened to be puniſhed as REBELS to their King, and deſtroyers of the public tranquillity; and the city of Paris, in caſe the

King,

King, Queen, and the Royal Family are not immediately *set at liberty*, is to be delivered up to the horrors of military execution.

This filled up the measure of the popular fury. It was not doubted but the King had authorized the use thus made of his name, and matters were almost immediately brought to a crisis. On the 3d of August M. Petion at the head of the sections of Paris appeared at the bar of the National Assembly, to demand the DECHÉANCE of the King. A petition of the same tenor was presented by a countless multitude on the 6th, and the Assembly had appointed the 10th of August to decide upon this grand question; but the discussion was dreadfully anticipated. Early on the morning of the 10th the palace of the Tuilleries was attacked by the Parisian populace; and being resolutely defended by the Swiss Guards, a most bloody conflict took place, which terminated in the total defeat and destruction of the Guards, and the complete triumph of the Parisians. The King at the commencement of the engagement had—not certainly in the spirit of Henry IV.—made his retreat across the gardens of the Tuilleries, with the Queen, to the Hall of the Assembly, who continued their sitting in the midst of this unexampled scene of terror and confusion, and the incessant noise of musquetry and cannon. All freedom of deliberation was now at an end. A decree passed without debate, declaring the

the Executive Power ſuſpended, and ſummoning a National Convention to meet on the 20th of September. The King and Queen meanwhile were committed cloſe priſoners to the Temple. A moſt ſpirited juſtificatory declaration of the meaſure of ſuſpenſion was publiſhed by the Aſſembly, concluding with theſe words: "We have diſcharged our duty in ſeizing with courage on the only means of preſerving liberty that occurred to our conſideration; we ſhall be ſpared remorſe at leaſt, nor ſhall we have to reproach ourſelves with having ſeen a means of ſaving our country and not having embraced it."

On the following day a new Proviſional Executive Council was appointed, conſiſting of the popular Miniſters Roland, Servan, and Claviere, diſmiſſed by the King; to whom was added M. Le Brun, as Miniſter of Foreign Affairs. M. Luckner, M. Dumourier now acting in the capacity of General in the Army, and the other Commanders, ſubmitted with readineſs to the authority of the Aſſembly. M. Fayette alone attempted reſiſtance; but finding himſelf wholly unſupported by his troops, he was obliged to make a precipitate eſcape. Being intercepted in his flight, and delivered up to the Pruſſians, he was committed cloſe priſoner to the fortreſs of Spandau, where he has been treated with a ſeverity not to be wholly aſcribed to the part taken by him in the *late* Revolution. The

combined

combined armies of Auſtria and Pruſſia in the mean time made a rapid and alarming progreſs. The town of Longwy ſurrendered on the 21ſt of Auguſt, and in a few days afterwards that of Verdun; yet even in theſe circumſtances the National Aſſembly had the magnanimity to declare war againſt the King of Sardinia, who had given repeated and flagrant proofs of his hoſtile diſpoſition towards France.

Since the depoſition of the King the priſons had been filled with perſons accuſed or ſuſpected of diſaffection to the exiſting government; and a ſort of phrenſy ſeizing the populace on the expected approach of the Duke, the priſons were forced open on the night of the 2d of September, and a moſt horrid and indiſcriminate maſſacre of the priſoners took place. It is ſaid that, application being made on this occaſion to M. Danton, Miniſter of JUSTICE, to interpoſe his authority in order to put a ſtop to theſe deteſtable enormities, he replied, "When the people have done their part, I will perform mine."

On the 20th of September the National Convention met at Paris, and a decree immediately paſſed by acclamation for the eternal abolition of Royalty in France. Such had been the inſidious negligence of the Court, that the country was wholly unprepared for its defence; and M. Dumourier, to whom the deſtiny of France was now entruſted,

entruſted, could ſcarcely oppoſe thirty thouſand men to the army of the Duke of Brunſwic, conſiſting of eighty thouſand. With this ſmall force he determined to make his ſtand at the Foreſt of Argonne, the paſſes of which, after repeated attempts, the Duke found himſelf unable to force. The French army receiving continual reinforcements, and the Pruſſians ſuffering under the united evils of ſickneſs and famine, he was compelled to the humiliating neceſſity of commencing his retreat on the 1ſt of October, and by the 18th the Auſtrian and Pruſſian armies had completely evacuated France*. By this time the French arms

* The noble Ode of Buchanan on the retreat of the Emperor Charles V. from Metz, addreſſed to Henry II. King of France, is admirably applicable to the retreat of Brunſwic, and the triumph of Dumourier.

"Tu bellicoſæ dux bone Galliæ
Sperare promptam cuncta ſuperbiam
Compeſcuiſti: tu dediſti
Indomito laqueos furori.

Quis vultus illi? qui dolor intimis
Arſit medullis? Spiritus impotens
Cum clauſtra ſpectaret Moſellæ
Et juvenum intrepidam coronam.

Sic unda rupes fævit in obvias;
Clauſus caminis ignis inæſtuat:
Hyrcana ſic tigris cruento
Dente ſuas furit in catenas."

were

were triumphant in every quarter. General Monteſquiou entering Savoy on the 20th of September, was received with joyful acclamation at Chamberri the capital, and the whole country ſubmitted almoſt without reſiſtance. On the other ſide, the fortreſs of Montalban and the entire county of Nice were conquered by General Anſelm. On the banks of the Rhine General Cuſtine diſtinguiſhed himſelf by the moſt brilliant ſucceſſes—reducing ſucceſſively the cities of Worms, Spire, Mentz, and Frankfort.

Early in November General Dumourier entered the Auſtrian Netherlands; and on the 5th of November, a day ſacred to liberty, attacking the Auſtrian entrenchments at Jemappe near Mons, he gained a moſt complete and ſignal victory, the conſequences of which were deciſive as to the fate of the Netherlands. Mons inſtantly ſurrendered. Tournay, Oſtend, Ghent, and Antwerp ſoon followed; and on the 14th the French General made his triumphal entry into Bruſſels. And before the end of the year, the whole of the Auſtrian Low Countries, Luxembourg only excepted, together with the city and territory of Liege, were ſubjected by the victorious arms of France. Such were the aſtoniſhing effects of that glorious enthuſiaſm, which can only be inſpired by the love of FREEDOM *!

In

* Long had the Giant form on Gallia's plains
Inglorious ſlept, unconſcious of his chains;

Round

In the midſt of the exultation occaſioned by this unexampled ſeries of triumphs, a decree was paſſed by acclamation in the Aſſembly November 19, 1792, in the following terms:—"The National Convention declare, in the name of the French Nation, that they will grant fraternity and aſſiſtance to all thoſe people who wiſh to procure liberty. And they charge the Executive Power to ſend orders to the Generals to give aſſiſtance to ſuch people; and to defend citizens who have ſuffered and are now ſuffering in the cauſe of Liberty."

This famous decree, which deſerved to be conſidered in no other light than as a magnificent

Round his large limbs were wound a thouſand ſtrings
By the weak hands of Confeſſors and Kings;
O'er his cloſed eyes a triple veil was bound,
And ſteely rivets locked him to the ground:
While ſtern Baſtille with iron cage inthralls
His folded limbs, and hems in marble walls.
—Touch'd by the patriot flame, he rent amaz'd
The flimſy bonds, and round and round him gaz'd;
Starts up from earth, above the admiring throng
Liſts his coloſſal form, and towers along:
High o'er his foes his hundred arms he rears,
Ploughſhares his ſwords, and pruning-hooks his ſpears;
Calls to the good and brave with voice that rolls
Like Heaven's own thunder round the echoing poles;
Gives to the winds his banner broad unfurl'd,
And gathers in its ſhade the living WORLD.

DARWIN'S BOTANIC GARDEN.

and

and empty vaunt, was productive of very ſtrange and ſerious conſequences. Two other decrees of the Aſſembly alſo demand a ſpecific notice: the one erecting the Duchy of Savoy into an 84th department of the French Republic, contrary to a fundamental article of the Conſtitution, by which ſhe renounced all foreign conqueſt: the other, on the capture of Antwerp, declaratory of the freedom of navigation on the river Scheldt.

Before we revert to the affairs of Great Britain, it may be proper tranſiently to notice the ſituation of the different Powers of Europe not actually engaged in the *cruſade* againſt France.

Great pains had been taken by the Courts of Vienna and St. Peterſburg to engage the Republic of Poland in the laſt war againſt Turkey; and the King of Poland had been perſonally preſent at the memorable interview of Cherſon. But the ſervile dependency on Ruſſia, in which the Republic had been held ſince the æra of the acceſſion of Staniſlaus, was odious to the Poles; and a new intereſt—that of PRUSSIA—had lately gained the aſcendency in the Diet, under the favorable auſpices of which Poland ſeemed for a time to recover ſome ſhare of importance in the European ſcale of power. The propoſition of war was rejected; and a treaty of amity and defenſive alliance concluded with Pruſſia February 1790. In

the Diet held at Warſaw May 1791, a new conſtitutional code was announced and promulgated, to the great joy of the nation, deeply ſenſible of the evils reſulting from her former inefficient and defective form of government. By the new *formula* the crown of Poland was declared to be hereditary, and the executive power veſted ſolely in the Monarch. The privileges of the Ariſtocracy were circumſcribed within narrower limits, and the bleſſings of liberty in ſome degree extended to the maſs of the people. The King of Pruſſia, by his Ambaſſador at Warſaw, formally congratulated the King and the Republic of Poland on this happy event. But ſoon the ſcene totally changed. The Empreſs of Ruſſia declared her entire diſapprobation of the late Revolution, and, as the guarantee of the former Conſtitution, ordered an army of one hundred thouſand men to enter the territories of the Republic.

Finding no force ſufficient to ſtop, or ſcarcely to impede their progreſs, the Ruſſian Generals proceeded to Warſaw; and the whole country being now in their hands, the new Conſtitution was forcibly and totally annulled at the enſuing Diet of Grodno. The King of Pruſſia, far from interpoſing in their behalf, with unexampled and unbluſhing perfidy embraced eagerly the opportunity of profiting by their diſtreſs, and concluded

with the Empreſs a ſecond partition treaty, by which the provinces of Volhinia, Podolia, and the Ukraine, with the half of Lithuania which remained to Poland on the former diviſion, were aſſigned to Ruſſia. And nearly the whole of Great Poland, with the cities of Dantzick and Thorn, was allotted to the King of Pruſſia, from whom this new acquiſition of territory received the appellation of South Pruſſia. The Manifeſto of the Court of Berlin publiſhed on this occaſion, and in vindication of theſe proceedings, declared with effrontery unparalleled, "that the Poles, miſled by deſigning men, had eſtabliſhed a Government ſubverſive of all order in ſociety, and deſtructive of all happineſs amongſt individuals." All theſe outrages and uſurpations the Diet of Grodno, reduced to the loweſt ſtate of national humiliation, was ultimately compelled to ratify.

The affairs of Sweden, ſince the termination of the war with Ruſſia, remained in a perplexed and critical ſituation. The King of Sweden ſummoned, in the beginning of 1792, a Diet to meet at Geſle, a ſolitary and obſcure place on the borders of the Bothnic Gulf, 70 miles from Stockholm. During the ſitting of the Diet the town was filled with troops. Notwithſtanding theſe precautions, the demands and expectations of the King were by no means anſwered; and the Diet was finally diſſolved in anger. On his return to

Stockholm he was aſſaſſinated at a maſquerade by an officer of the name of Engerſtrom, actuated by the enthuſiaſm of public and the rancor of perſonal revenge.

He was ſucceeded by his ſon Guſtavus IV. a youth of fourteen years of age: and the Regency was veſted in the hands of the Duke of Sudermania, brother to the late King, who has conducted himſelf in his high office with ſingular prudence and propriety. It was generally underſtood that Guſtavus III. had acceded to the CONSPIRACY of SOVEREIGNS againſt France, and had even propoſed to take the command of the combined armies in perſon; but the Regent maintained a ſtrict and ſcrupulous neutrality. The ſame wiſe plan was alſo ſteadily purſued by Denmark, under the excellent and admirable adminiſtration of Count Bernſtorff. The Italian and Helvetic Republics adopted the ſame ſafe and ſalutary ſyſtem. Spain alone appeared wavering and indeciſive, agitated by the alternate fluctuations of policy and paſſion.

In conſequence of the tranſactions of the 10th of Auguſt, and the virtual depoſition of the French Monarch, Lord Gower, the Engliſh Ambaſſador at Paris, received orders from the Court of London to quit the kingdom, on the ſlight and frivolous pretext, that, the functions of Royalty being ſuſpended, his miſſion was at an end. This recall

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was conſidered by the leading men in France, as a certain and very ominous indication of the enmity of the Britiſh Court: nevertheleſs, as a demonſtration of their moderation, and ſolicitude for peace, M. Chauvelin the French Ambaſſador ſtill remained in London, though from this period unacknowledged in any public or authoriſed capacity. The recall of the Engliſh Ambaſſador at this critical moment, on the ground ſtated by the Engliſh Court, ſeemed to imply that appointments of this nature are a mere matter of form and compliment between Sovereigns: but if Ambaſſadors are conſidered in a higher and juſter light, as the neceſſary means of intercourſe between nation and nation, never could the recall of an Ambaſſador take place at a period when his preſence and ſervices were more indiſpenſable.

On the ſucceſs of the French arms in Flanders, the Court of London gave a ſtill farther proof of their inimical diſpoſition, by making an eager, officious, and unſolicited offer of aſſiſtance to the States General in caſe of need. But their High Mightineſſes declared themſelves under no apprehenſion of attack. Alſo, in direct violation of the Commercial Treaty, an excluſive embargo was laid on veſſels freighted with corn for France.

The cauſes of the depoſition of the French Monarch, and the nature of the provocations and in-

juries which preceded and produced that event, not being sufficiently understood in England, it made an impression very unfavorable upon the minds of the generality of the people, already biassed and perverted by the inflammatory declamations of Mr. Burke and his partisans. And the horrid massacres of September completely alienated their minds from the Revolution, although these detestable enormities could not in any rational sense be said to originate in the Revolution, but merely and solely in the opposition made to its establishment. The nation was on a sudden struck with terror at the idea of any political innovation of any kind; and the very name of REFORM became the subject of violent and indiscriminate reprobation.

Under the impression of this prevailing prepossession, an Association openly countenanced by Government was formed in London for the protection of Liberty and Property against Republicans and Levellers; and an innumerable multitude of pamphlets, in the popular form of letters, dialogues and narratives, were circulated by this means throughout the kingdom, inculcating an unreserved submission to Government, on the old exploded principles of Toryism and High Churchism. In one of the most notorious of these tracts it was urged in favor of Monarchy, "that the King is

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in ſcripture called the LORD'S ANOINTED; but who, ſay theſe profound politicians, ever heard of an ANOINTED REPUBLIC?"

The rage of aſſociating ſpread rapidly through the kingdom; and in every county, and almoſt every town, reſolutions were ſubſcribed ſtrongly expreſſive of loyalty and attachment to the King and Conſtitution, and abhorrence of all levelling and republican doctrines. The populace entering with violence into theſe ſentiments, and their paſſions being by the methods now put in practice dangerouſly excited, the cry of CHURCH and KING was vociferated with tremendous clamors from the Tamar to the Tweed; from the Cliffs of Dover to the Hills of Cheviot.

Previous to this extraordinary diſplay of loyalty, it had been not unuſual for the violent zealots of Republicaniſm in England to tranſmit addreſſes to the Convention, declaratory in high-flown terms of their applauſe and admiration. The moſt remarkable of theſe, entitled "An Addreſs from ſeveral Patriotic Societies in England," was preſented, November 7, at the bar of the Convention, containing, in addition to the accuſtomed complimentary expreſſions, the moſt indecent and indefenſible reflections upon the Government and Conſtitution of their own country. "Whilſt foreign plunderers ravage your territories (ſay theſe Addreſſers), an *oppreſſed part of mankind*, forgetting

their own evils, are ſenſible only of yours, and addreſs their fervent prayers to the GOD of the univerſe that he may be favorable to your cauſe, with *which theirs is ſo intimately connected.*—Degraded by an oppreſſive ſyſtem of inquiſition, the inſenſible but continual encroachments of which quickly deprived this nation of its boaſted liberty, and reduced it almoſt to that abject ſtate of ſlavery from which you have ſo glorioufly emancipated yourſelves—FIVE THOUSAND Engliſh citizens, fired with indignation, have the courage to ſtep forward to reſcue their country from that opprobrium which has been thrown on it by the baſe conduct of thoſe who are inveſted with power. —We ſee with concern that the Elector of Hanover unites his troops to thoſe of traitors and robbers: but the King of England will do well to remember that England is not Hanover. *Should* HE forget this, WE will not forget it." The Preſident of the Convention, in his anſwer to this daring and inſolent Addreſs, had the extreme indiſcretion to uſe expreſſions full of reſpect and complacency. " The ſentiments of five thouſand Britons," ſaid he, " devoted openly to the cauſe of mankind, exiſt *without doubt* in the hearts of all the freemen in England." And what is ſtill more ſurpriſing, copies of the Addreſs were ordered to be ſent to all the armies and departments of the Republic.

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The true key to this moſt impolitic, raſh, and inſulting conduct of the Convention, ſo far as the acts of a democratic Aſſembly, too oft proceeding from the impulſe of the moment, can be traced to ſyſtem, is, that in conſequence of the number of oſtentatious, but really inſignificant addreſſes preſented at their bar, they were moſt egregiouſly deceived with reſpect to the ſentiments of the people of England at this period; and they fancied that, by gratifying their reſentment againſt the Court, they ſhould at the ſame time recommend themſelves to the Nation at large, with whom it is certain that they ardently wiſhed to cultivate a good underſtanding *.

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* During the whole of our journey, ſays an intelligent traveller (December 1792), we remarked that the apprehenſion of a war with England was peculiarly painful to the French. Though flushed with their late ſucceſſes, and confident againſt a world in arms, it was evident there was nothing they dreaded more than ſuch an event; not merely on account of the miſchief that might enſue, but becauſe it would force them to regard as enemies the only nation in Europe they conſidered as their friends.—All along the road they anxiouſly aſked us what we thought would be the conſequence of the armament in England? We frankly told them we preſumed it would be war; and generally obſerved a moment of ſilence and dejection follow the delivery of our opinion. The imminence of hoſtilities, however, in no degree diminiſhed the reſpect they ſhewed us as Engliſhmen: and not only we did not meet with any thing like an inſult in the whole of our tour, but, on the contrary, we experienced every where

The decree of the 19th of November filled up the measure of their iniquity in the view of the Court of London; and in combination with the obnoxious addresses, it was regarded as little less than an act of open aggression. Certainly the English Government had just cause of resentment, and an undoubted right to adequate reparation. Unhappily the Court of London, inflamed with indignation, sought not reparation merely, but revenge. Her measures being now determined on, a Royal Proclamation was issued December 1, 1792, announcing the alarming intelligence, "that notwithstanding the late proclamation of the 21st of May, the utmost industry was still employed by evil-disposed persons within the kingdom, acting in concert with persons in foreign parts, with a view to subvert the Laws and Constitution; and that a spirit of tumult and disorder, *thereby excited*,

particular kindness and attention. They seemed eager to court our good opinion; and frequently begged us not to ascribe to a whole nation the faults of individuals, and not to charge their Government with disorders its present state of vacillation rendered it incompetent to repress.—I confess I should never have suspected that I was travelling among a nation of savages, madmen, and assassins—I should rather have wished with SHAKESPEARE,

> ——————That these contending kingdoms,
> England and France, whose very shores look pale
> With envy of each other's happiness,
> May lose their hatred.
>
> *Vide* "Tour through the Theatre of War 1792."

had lately ſhewn itſelf in acts of riot and INSURRECTION—And that, theſe cauſes moving him thereto, his Majeſty had reſolved forthwith to embody part of the militia of the kingdom."

On the ſame day another proclamation was iſſued for convening the Parliament (which ſtood prorogued to the 3d of January, 1793) on the 13th of December; the law requiring, that if the militia be drawn out during the receſs of Parliament, and this it can only be in caſe of invaſion or actual *inſurrection*, Parliament ſhall be aſſembled within the ſpace of fourteen days.

The public alarm cauſed by theſe proceedings was inexpreſſible. Every one was convinced of the exiſtence of a PLOT, which was ſo much the more terrible from its being inviſible and incomprehenſible. The Miniſter did not diſdain to heighten the general conſternation by the palpable artifices of marching troops to the metropolis, of doubling the guard at the Bank, and of repairing the fortifications of the Tower.

On the meeting of Parliament on the day appointed, the expreſſions of the firſt proclamation were repeated in his Majeſty's Speech; towards the concluſion of which the real views of the Court became ſufficiently manifeſt. "I have, ſaid his Majeſty, carefully obſerved a ſtrict neutrality in the preſent war on the Continent, and have uniformly abſtained from any interference with reſpect

ſpect to the internal government of France; but it is impoſſible for me to ſee without the moſt ſerious uneaſineſs the ſtrong and increaſing indications which have appeared there, of an intention to excite diſturbances in other countries, to diſregard the rights of neutral nations, and purſue views of conqueſt and aggrandizement, as well as to adopt towards my allies the States General meaſures which were neither conformable to the law of nations nor to the poſitive ſtipulations of exiſting treaties. Under theſe circumſtances his Majeſty thought it right to have recourſe to thoſe means of prevention and internal defence with which he was entruſted by law, and to make ſome augmentation of his naval and military force."

On moving the Addreſs in anſwer to the Speech, a memorable debate aroſe. Never did the ſtrength and ſuperiority of Mr. Fox's genius appear perhaps ſo conſpicuous as in this moment of national infatuation. "This," ſaid Mr. Fox, "is the moſt momentous criſis, not only that I have ever known, but that I have ever read of in the hiſtory of this country—a criſis not merly intereſting to ourſelves, but to all nations; and on the conduct of Parliament depends the fate of the Britiſh Conſtitution—perhaps the future happineſs of mankind. His Majeſty's Speech contains a variety of aſſertions of the moſt extraordinary nature. We are told there exiſts

exiſts at this moment an inſurrection in this kingdom.—An INSURRECTION!—where is it? where has it reared its head? Although this inſurrection has exiſted fourteen days, Miniſters have given us no light whatever, no clue, no information where to find it. There have been, as I underſtand, and as every one muſt have heard, ſome ſlight riots in different parts; but I aſk, Were the various pretexts of theſe different tumults falſe, and uſed only to cover an attempt to deſtroy our happy Conſtitution? I have heard of a tumult at Shields, of another at Leith, of ſomething of the ſame nature at Yarmouth and Dundee. But were the ſailors who demanded an increaſe of their wages actuated by a deſign of overthrowing the Conſtitution? Is there a man in England who is credulous enough to believe it?—The Addreſs now moved ſays modeſtly, 'We are ſorry to hear there is an inſurrection.' Of the tumults in the ſea-ports we had ſome previous knowledge, but the inſurrection we learn from his Majeſty's Speech. It has been alleged as a proof of diſaffection, that the countenances of many wore the face of joy when the intelligence arrived of the Duke of Brunſwick's retreat. What! is it a ſufficient demonſtration of republicaniſm, that men ſhould rejoice in the diſcomfiture of the armies of Deſpotiſm combating againſt Liberty? Could any man who loves the Conſtitution of this country wiſh

ſucceſs

ſucceſs to the Duke of Brunſwick, after reading a Manifeſto which violated every principle of juſtice, humanity, freedom, and true government?—Who will dare to defend that ſyſtem of tyranny and coercion, which inſiſts that Engliſhmen ſhall not indulge any genuine feelings of their own—which tells them that they muſt not think but by permiſſion—that they muſt rejoice and grieve as it ſuits the caprice or the pleaſure of the Miniſters? Are we to arraign a man for his ſecret and ſuppoſed deſigns, and arrogate to ourſelves at once the province and the power of the Deity?—What innocence can be ſafe from this more than inquiſitorial oppreſſion?—Doubtleſs there are ſpeculative perſons in this country who diſapprove of the ſyſtem of our Government: and there muſt be ſuch men as long as the land is free, for it is of the very eſſence of freedom for men to differ upon ſpeculative points. From the inſtant that opinion ſhall be held dependent upon the will of the Miniſter or the Magiſtrate, I date the extinction of our liberties as a people."

In paſſing to that part of the King's Speech which related to France, Mr. Fox aſſerted "that there never was a period when this country had ſo much reaſon to wiſh for peace. Never was there a period leſs favorable to a ſyſtem of hoſtility. How frequently have wars been prevented by negotiation! Why then diſdain to negotiate now?

now ?—Becauſe we had no Miniſter at Paris. And why have we no Miniſter ?—Becauſe France is a Republic. For this punctilio then it is that the blood and treaſure of the kingdom are to be expended !—As to the free navigation of the Scheldt, I will not believe that a war can in reality be undertaken for an object ſo trivial, or that Holland itſelf would deſire or approve it. What was the conduct of France under her former depraved government, when the Emperor menaced the opening of the Scheldt in 1786 ? Was war declared in order to prevent it ? No ; they opened a negotiation, and carried the point by amicable interpoſition. Is not the ultimate object of republicans and levellers aided by plunging the nation in a war without due and previous enquiry ? I conjure Parliament to avoid involving the people in ſo dreadful a calamity, without coolly reflecting on its neceſſity."

Mr. Fox concluded with moving an amendment, ſimply pledging the Houſe " that enquiry ſhould be made into the facts ſtated in his Majeſty's Speech." After a debate of many hours, the Houſe divided for the amendment 50, againſt it 290 !

In the Houſe of Lords the addreſs was carried without a diviſion ; but not without a powerful oppoſition from the Duke of Norfolk, and the Lords Lanſdowne, Rawdon, and Stanhope.

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In conſequence of the late alarms, the Oppoſition, or Whig Party, had, as it now appeared, ſuffered a great and melancholy defection. At the head of the ſeceders in the Upper Houſe, were the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Portland, and Lords Fitzwilliam, Spencer, and LOUGHBOROUGH, who on the *reſignation* of Lord Thurlow at this period was advanced to the Chancellorſhip; and in the Lower Houſe, Mr. Burke, Mr. Windham, Sir Gilbert Elliot, Mr. Anſtruther, &c. who acquired by this means the popular appellation of ALARMISTS. On the bringing up the report, on the ſucceeding day, the debate was reſumed with freſh vehemence. Mr. Fox moſt ſeverely cenſured the Miniſters for not having interpoſed the mediation of Great Britain, in order to preſerve the peace of Europe. Had we proteſted againſt the project concerted at Pilnitz, and armed to prevent the execution of it, England muſt have acquired ſuch an aſcendency in the Councils of France as would have completely obviated all the ſubſequent cauſes of diſſatisfaction. "If," ſaid Mr. Fox, "there exiſts a diſcontented or diſaffected party in the kingdom, what can ſo much add to their numbers, or their influence, as a war, which, by increaſing the public burdens till they become intolerable, will give proportionable weight to their complaints? He wiſhed therefore that war ſhould be avoided, if poſſible—that negotia-

tion ſhould precede hoſtility. He was fully aware of the arrogant notions of Miniſters, who perhaps would not condeſcend to receive a Miniſter from the French Republic. If this were the caſe, let Miniſters fairly avow it—that the people of England might know how far the eſſential intereſts of the nation were ſacrificed to a *punctilio*. Gentlemen ſhould recollect that it was once faſhionable to talk of 'a vagrant Congreſs,' of 'one Hancock' and 'one Adams' and 'their Crew.' But ſurely the folly of this language had been ſufficiently proved." He then moved an amendment, "beſeeching his Majeſty to employ every means of honorable negotiation, for the purpoſe of preventing a war with France." The motion was oppoſed by Mr. Burke in a frantic ſpeech, in which he affirmed, that to ſend an Ambaſſador to France would be the prelude to the murder of our Sovereign." Mr. Pitt was at this time not a Member of the Houſe, having vacated his ſeat by the acceptance of the lucrative ſinecure of the Cinque Ports, void by the death of the Earl of Guildford, once ſo famous under the title of Lord North.

In the abſence of the Miniſter, Mr. Secretary Dundas entered into a long and elaborate vindication of the meaſures of Adminiſtration; and he concluded with a confident prediction, that "*if we were forced into a war, it* MUST *prove* SUCCESSFUL

and

and GLORIOUS." The amendment was negatived without a diviſion.

Not diſcouraged at the ill ſucceſs of theſe attempts, Mr. Fox on the 15th of December moved, at the cloſe of a ſpeech which only ſerved to demonſtrate how incompetent are the utmoſt efforts of human wiſdom to work conviction in minds diſtempered by prejudice and paſſion, "that a Miniſter be ſent to Paris to treat with thoſe perſons who exerciſe proviſionally the executive government of France. "This," he ſaid, "implied neither approbation nor diſapprobation of the conduct of the exiſting French Government. It was the policy and the practice of every nation to treat with the exiſting Government of every other nation with which it had relative intereſts, without enquiring how that Government was conſtituted, or by what means it acquired poſſeſſion of power. Was the exiſting Government of Morocco more reſpectable than that of France? Yet we had more than once ſent embaſſies thither, to men reeking from the blood through which they had waded to their thrones. We had Miniſters at the German Courts, at the time of the infamous partition of Poland. We had a Miniſter at Verſailles when Corſica was bought and enſlaved. But in none of theſe inſtances was any ſanction given directly or indirectly by Great Britain to theſe nefarious tranſactions."

Mr. Francis, in a very excellent ſpeech, remonſtrated

ſtrated and proteſted againſt the manner in which the debate had been conducted on the part of the Miniſterialiſts. "How," ſaid he, "has this awful queſtion been agitated? By appeals to our underſtanding? No—by exciting our paſſions, by agitating our feelings, by preſenting perpetually to our imagination ſcenes of horror. Thus do the Houſe in fact deprive themſelves of all capacity to debate—of all power to judge. They liſten with rapture to invectives, and echo them back in ſhouts and clamors. Is this a Britiſh Houſe of Commons? or am I ſuddenly tranſplanted by ſome enchantment into that Convention againſt which the perpetual theme of reproach is, that they deliberate in paſſion, and reſolve by acclamation?"

In anſwer to the abſurd and puerile objection, that, if we agreed to a negotiation, we ſhould not know with whom to negotiate, Mr. Whitbread aſked with energetic animation, "if we knew with whom we were going to make war? If there was no difficulty in deciding upon that point, how could we pretend to be at a loſs to know with whom we were to make peace? Doubtleſs with that Aſſembly, truly deſcribed by his Majeſty as exerciſing the powers of government in France."

Mr. Courtenay animadverted with poignant ſeverity upon the rhapſodical extravagancies which had fallen from Mr. Burke; and he read to the Houſe a paſſage from the famous pamphlet pub-

liſhed by him, which he ſaid he conſidered as the prelude to the Duke of Brunſwic's diſgraceful Manifeſto. Mr. Courtenay ſaid, that "Mr. Burke was the dupe of his imagination. His imagination was a magic lanthorn, preſenting a rapid and exhauſtleſs ſucceſſion of phantaſms. There were chivalry—the Duke of Brunſwic—Petion faction—National Convention—King of Armenia—Senate of Rome—Marat—Aſſaſſinations—Corinthian capitals—Tom Paine—and many other things, making a complete raree-ſhow, for the entertainment of the admirers of that gentleman. Mr. Courtenay acknowledged that he had never felt ſo much pleaſure, as when the Pruſſians, who had entered France not as ſoldiers but as ruffians, had been driven back in ſhame and confuſion. He had participated in the triumph when M. Dumourier made his *joyeuſe entrée* into Brabant."

Mr. Windham had laid it down as an axiom of policy, "that to be *juſtified* in negotiating with France, it ſhould be a matter of neceſſity, not of choice."

"Happy, dignified opportunity to treat!" exclaimed Mr. Sheridan, "when neceſſity, a neceſſity ariſing from defeat and diſcomfiture, from ſhame and diſgrace, ſhall compel us to negotiate on terms which would leave us completely at their mercy! How conſolatory, to be able to boaſt that we are at the ſame time *juſtified* and UNDONE —But

—But we are told," continued Mr. Sheridan, "that to treat with France would give offence to the Allied Powers, with whom we are eventually to co-operate. Are we then prepared to make a common cauſe on the principles and for the purpoſes for which thoſe deſpots have aſſociated? Are the freemen of England ready to ſubſcribe to the Manifeſto of the Duke of Brunſwic? that deteſtable outrage on the rights and feelings of human nature! that impotent and wretched tiſſue of pride, folly and cruelty, which had ſteeled the heart and maddened the brain of all France! The queſtion is not merely, whether we ſhould go to war or not? but on what principle ſhould it be conducted, and to what end directed? To reſtore the antient deſpotiſm of France? Impoſſible! Diſputes and cauſes of complaint exiſting, how were they to be terminated, but by ſome ſort of negotiation? But we were told, that the dignity of the nation forbad a public and avowed communication with the preſent ruling powers in France. Was the dignity of the nation better conſulted by the mean ſubterfuge of an indirect and underhand intercourſe? Was it ſacrificed by a magnanimous frankneſs, and ſuſtained only by dark and inſidious diſguiſe? Far from recalling the Ambaſſador of England from Paris at the late perilous criſis, a *Stateſman-like Adminiſtration* would

have regarded the poſt of Miniſter at Paris, as the ſituation which demanded the firſt and ableſt talents of the country. It was a ſituation which afforded ſcope and intereſt for the nobleſt mind that ever warmed a human boſom. The French had been uniformly partial, and even prejudiced, in favor of the Engliſh. What manly ſenſe, and generous feeling, and above all what fair truth and plain dealing might have effected, it was difficult to calculate. But the policy which diſcarded theſe, and which ſubſtituted in their ſtead a HOLLOW NEUTRALITY, was an error fatal in its conſequences, and for ever to be lamented." The motion was in the end negatived without a diviſion.

Mr. Grey, Mr. Erſkine, and Mr. Adam diſtinguiſhed themſelves in the courſe of theſe debates by very able and eloquent ſpeeches on the part of the Oppoſition. And the deſertion of their *friends*, far from diſpiriting the faithful few who remained, ſeemed to animate them to ſtill higher and more ardent exertions of patriotic zeal. The popular odium incurred by the Leaders of Oppoſition, and in particular by Mr. Fox, in conſequence of their generous endeavors to reſcue their country from the gulf of ruin into which it was with ſuch blind and raſh precipitancy about to plunge, will appear to poſterity ſcarcely credible. Neither profeſſing a contempt for the public judgment, nor on the

the other hand yielding for a moment to the tide of popular opinion, Mr. Fox publiſhed at this period a very animated and dignified Addreſs to his Conſtituents, the Electors of Weſtminſter, ſtating, with admirable force and perſpicuity of argument, his reaſons for his late parliamentary conduct. The concluſion of this juſtly celebrated Addreſs is peculiarly ſtriking. "Let us not," ſays he, "attempt to deceive ourſelves. Whatever poſſibility, or even probability, there may be of a Counter-Revolution from internal agitation and diſcord, the means of producing ſuch an event by external force can be no other than the conqueſt of France.—The CONQUEST of FRANCE! O calumniated cruſaders, how rational and moderate were your objects! O much injured Louis XIV. upon what ſlight grounds have you been accuſed of reſtleſs and immoderate ambition! O tame and feeble Cervantes, with what a timid pencil and faint colors have you painted the portrait of a diſordered imagination!"

Although the determination of the Engliſh Court was from the firſt ſufficiently manifeſt, the Government of France left no means uneſſayed to accompliſh an accommodation.

On the 17th of December a Memorial was preſented by M. Chauvelin to Lord Grenville, in which he informs his Lordſhip, that the Executive Council of the French Republic, thinking it a

duty which they owe to the French Nation, not to leave it in the ſtate of ſuſpenſe into which it has been thrown by the late meaſures of the Britiſh Government, have authorized him to demand with openneſs, whether France ought to conſider England as a neutral or hoſtile power; at the ſame time being ſolicitous, that not the ſmalleſt doubt ſhould exiſt reſpecting the diſpoſition of France towards England, and of its deſire to remain in peace. In alluſion to the decree of the 19th of November, M. Chauvelin ſays, "that the French Nation abſolutely reject the idea of that falſe interpretation, by which it might be ſuppoſed that the French Republic ſhould favor inſurrections, or excite diſturbance in any neutral or friendly country whatever. In particular, they declare in the moſt ſolemn manner, that France will not attack Holland ſo long as that power adheres to the principles of her neutrality. As to the navigation of the Scheldt, M. Chauvelin affirms it to be a queſtion of too little importance to be made the ſole cauſe of a war; and that it could only be uſed as a pretext for a premeditated aggreſſion. On this fatal ſuppoſition, he ſays, the French Nation will accept war: but SUCH a war would be the war not of the Britiſh Nation, but of the Britiſh Miniſtry, againſt the French Republic; and of this he conjures them well to conſider the TERRIBLE RESPONSIBILITY." To this communication

munication Lord Grenville returned a moſt arrogant and provoking anſwer. His Lordſhip acknowledged the receipt of a *Note* from M. Chauvelin, *ſtyling himſelf* Miniſter Plenipotentiary of France. He reminds him that the King, ſince the unhappy events of the 10th of Auguſt, had ſuſpended all *official* communication with France; and informs him, that he cannot be treated with in the quality and under the form ſtated in his *Note*. Nevertheleſs, "under a form neither regular nor official," his Lordſhip condeſcends to reply—but in a mode which could only tend to inflame the differences ſubſiſting between the two Nations; and which, far from accepting the conceſſions and explanations made by France, ſought only to diſcover new pretences of cavil and quarrel. In a tone of the moſt decided and lofty ſuperiority, his Lordſhip ſays, "If France is really deſirous of maintaining friendſhip and peace with England, ſhe muſt ſhew herſelf diſpoſed to renounce her views of aggreſſion and aggrandizement, and *to confine herſelf within her own territory*, without inſulting other Governments, without diſturbing their tranquillity, without violating their rights." The relinquiſhment of her recent conqueſts being thus haughtily demanded of France as a preliminary of peace, it might well be ſuppoſed that negotiation was at an end. But the Government of France, in the midſt of their tri-

umphs, diſcovered a degree of temper and moderation in their intercourſe with England as ſurpriſing as it was laudable. In anſwer to the letter of Lord Grenville, a Memorial was tranſmitted from M. Le Brun, Miniſter of Foreign Affairs, in the name of the Executive Council, dated January 4, 1793, framed in terms of ſingular wiſdom and ability, and forming a ſtriking contraſt to the pride, petulance, and folly diſplayed in the communications of the Engliſh Miniſter. They begin with repeating "the aſſurances of their ſincere deſire to maintain peace and harmony between France and England. It is with great reluctance, ſay they, that the Republic would ſee itſelf forced to a rupture much more contrary to its inclination than its intereſt."

In reference to Lord Grenville's refuſal to acknowledge M. Chauvelin in his diplomatic capacity, the Council remark, "that in the negotiations now carrying on at Madrid, the principal Miniſter of his Catholic Majeſty did not heſitate to addreſs M. Bourgoin, the Ambaſſador of the Republic at that Court, by the title of Miniſter Plenipotentiary of France. But that a defect in point of form might not impede a negotiation on the ſucceſs of which depended the tranquillity of two great nations, they had ſent credential letters to M. Chauvelin, to enable him to treat according

to

to the ſeverity of diplomatic forms. The Council repeat, that the decree of the 19th of November had been miſunderſtood; and that it was far from being intended to favor ſedition—being merely applicable to the ſingle caſe where the general will of a nation, clearly and unequivocally expreſſed, ſhould call for the aſſiſtance and fraternity of the French nation. Sedition can never exiſt in an expreſſion of the general will. The Dutch were certainly not ſeditious when they formed the generous reſolution of throwing off the Spaniſh yoke—nor was it accounted as a crime to Henry IV. or to Queen Elizabeth, that they liſtened to their ſolicitations of aſſiſtance. As to the right of navigation on the Scheldt, the Council affirm, that it is a queſtion of abſolute indifference to England, little intereſting even to Holland, but of great importance to the Belgians, who were not parties to the treaty of Weſtphalia, by which they were diveſted of that right; but when that nation ſhall find itſelf in full poſſeſſion of its liberty, and from *any motive whatever* ſhall conſent to deprive themſelves of the navigation of the Scheldt, *France will not oppoſe it.* With reſpect to the charge of aggrandiſement, France, they ſay, has renounced and ſtill renounces all conqueſt; and its occupying the Netherlands will CONTINUE NO LONGER THAN THE WAR.—If theſe explanations

tions appear insufficient, after having done every thing in our power to maintain peace, we will prepare for war. We shall combat with regret the English, whom we esteem, but we shall combat them without fear."

The reply of Lord Grenville to this Memorial was couched in terms still more extraordinary and irritating than the first. His Lordship declares, "that he finds nothing satisfactory in the result of it. Instead of reparation and retractation, his Lordship complains, that nothing more is offered than an *illusory negotiation*"—as if England had a right to expect that France should give up every point in dispute previous to any negotiation; or as if the offer of evacuating the Netherlands at the termination of the war, and of leaving the Belgians to *settle the question* relative to the Scheldt, together with the positive disavowal of the offensive meaning ascribed to the decree of November 19, did not form a proper and sufficient basis of negotiation. In fact, by these great concessions, every rational object of negotiation was accomplished before the negotiation itself had formally commenced. "Under this form of *extra-official* communication, nevertheless, Lord Grenville goes on to say, that these explanations are not considered sufficient, and that ALL the MOTIVES which gave rise to the preparations STILL CONTINUE. If however,

however, under the ſame *extra-official* form, you have any farther explanations, ſays his Lordſhip, to give, I ſhall willingly attend to them." In a ſeparate Note his Lordſhip informs M. Chauvelin, that his Majeſty will not receive his new letters of credence from the French Republic. M. Chauvelin then requeſted a perſonal interview with his Lordſhip, which was alſo refuſed.

At length this extraordinary buſineſs was brought to a criſis, by a letter from Lord Grenville, dated January 24, 1793, in which his Lordſhip ſays, "I am charged to notify to you, Sir, that the character with which you had been inveſted at this Court, and the functions of which have been ſo long ſuſpended, being now entirely terminated by the fatal death of his Moſt Chriſtian Majeſty, you have no longer any public character here; and his Majeſty has thought fit to order that you ſhould retire from this kingdom within the term of eight days."—At this very time M. Maret, a confidential agent of M. Le Brun, was on his way to England with freſh diſpatches from the Executive Council, and, as there is good ground to believe, freſh conceſſions of the higheſt importance. But on his arrival in London, being informed of the compulſive diſmiſſion of M. Chauvelin, he did not think himſelf authorized to open his commiſſion. He therefore

therefore merely announced his arrival to Lord Grenville, but no advances were made to him on the part of the English Court.

The death of the French Monarch was indeed a disastrous and mournful event. It is well known that the Executive Council, and a great majority of the Conventional Assembly, were eagerly desirous to have averted this fatal catastrophe; but the violence of the Jacobin faction, and the savage rage of the populace, rendered it impossible. "We may," said M. Le Brun to a confidential friend, "sacrifice ourselves, without being able to save the life of the King." It was not that the moderate party entertained any doubt of the veracity of the leading charges brought against the King; for, on this point, there was never any difference of opinion in France; but they discerned innumerable circumstances of palliation, which formed an irresistible claim to compassion and mercy. In England no one attempted to justify the deed; "nor," says an animated writer of that time, "is it the season for *extenuation*, now that the stream of prejudice flows strong, and the phantasm of a murdered King stalks before our affrightened imagination."

As, by an express provision of the treaty of 1786, the dismission of an Ambassador was in future to be regarded as a virtual declaration of war, it is

almost

almoſt ſuperfluous to mention the inferior cauſes of offence given to France immediately prior to that event, 1. by the ALIEN BILL, empowering the King, in direct contravention of the treaty of 1786, which ſtipulates the peaceful and undiſturbed reſidence of the ſubjects of each power in the dominions of the other, to order, at his diſcretion, all foreigners to depart the kingdom: 2. by the bill prohibiting the circulation of aſſignats, or other paper ſecurities iſſued under the authority of the French government; a meaſure rather of inſult than of injury: 3. by a bill of a more ſerious nature, reſtraining the exportation of naval ſtores, arms and ammunition, including by a ſpecific mention the article of ſalt-petre, of which it was well known that the French were in great need.

Immediately on the departure of M. Chauvelin, a Memorial was preſented by Lord Auckland, Ambaſſador at the Hague, to the States General; in which his Lordſhip affirms to their High Mightineſſes, in language which ſets all ideas of decorum at defiance, that "not four years ago, ſome WRETCHES, aſſuming the title of Philoſophers, had the preſumption to think themſelves capable of eſtabliſhing a new ſyſtem of civil ſociety. In order to realize that dream of their vanity, they found it neceſſary to overthrow and deſtroy all received notions of ſubordination, manners, and religion, which have

have hitherto formed all the security, happiness, and consolation of the human race. Their destructive projects have but too well succeeded. But the effects of the new system which they endeavored to introduce, served only to shew the imbecility and villany of its authors. The events which so rapidly followed each other since that epoch, surpass in atrocity all which had ever polluted the pages of history. Property, liberty, security, even life itself, have been deemed playthings in the hands of infamous men, who are the slaves of the most licentious passions of rapine, enmity, and ambition."

Such were the terms in which the wisdom of the English Court thought it becoming to speak of the existing Government of France! If any thing could add to the astonishment excited by this conduct, it would be, that a Commission was at the same time sent over to the same Ambassador to set on foot a negotiation with M. Dumourier, Commander of the Armies of the Government thus publicly vilified, in order to effect an accommodation of differences.

Whether this overture was really serious, or whether, according to the declared opinion of M. Dumourier himself, it was merely amusive and insidious, such a *prelude* must be equally the subject of admiration. In either case, it came too late to answer

ſwer the purpoſe. The Convention had taken their ultimate reſolution; and on the 1ſt of February 1793 a decree unanimouſly paſſed that Aſſembly, declaring the REPUBLIC OF FRANCE at WAR with the KING of GREAT BRITAIN, and the STADTHOLDER of HOLLAND.

FINIS.

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